WHICH IS BEST

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WHICH IS BEST?

LIGHT OR DARKNESS, GOOD OR EVIL?

PURITY OR FILTH, HEAVEN OR HELL?

CHOOSE YE, BUT FIRST READ

WHY PEOPLE

LOVE TO GO TO HELL;

OR, THE

WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

OF

A NEW YORK REPORTER.

1871

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

"Let sober moralists correct their speech;
No bad man's happy, be he poor or rich."

LOWELL:
PUBLISHED BY ALBERT COLBY,
39 MIDDLESEX ST., CLARK'S NEW BLOCK.
1871.
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ALSO READ,

TRUE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

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Price 30 cents for paper binding, or 60 cents for cloth gilt.
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In publishing No. 2 and No. 3 of "Which is Best?" series of pamphlets, I will say, No. 4 will be published as soon as copies enough are ordered to pay for printing. No. 1 is now ready, and several pages of it are appended to this volume, with title page of No. 4. I propose to give away some of these books, and if any person receives a copy who is not pleased with it, return the same to me and I will repay your postage; but if you are pleased and benefited, then help to please and benefit others by ordering more books, and persuading others to read them. To love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves, is the whole of true religion. If we strive to do right because it is right to do right, and a duty we owe to our Creator, and if we also strive to do by all just as we would be done by if our circumstances were reversed, then are we truly the Lord's children.

After spending many years in publishing and selling books, I retired from the business and devoted seven years of my life to other pursuits; but hoping to do more good by returning to the book business, I would respectfully announce that I will supply any book by mail, postage free, at publishers' regular retail prices, and to booksellers at regular wholesale prices; and I hope to manufacture a class of books that will enable agents to secure good wages for themselves, while they are laboring to benefit others.

ALBERT COLBY.

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DO PEOPLE ACTUALLY LOVE TO GO TO HELL?

THERE being more than one thousand different religious creeds in the world, all of them cannot be absolutely right; but no doubt there are good, honest people in all churches, and something of Truth underlying the foundation of every creed. A vast majority of all the inhabitants of the earth inherit their religious opinions, and are Pagans, Mohammedans, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, or other sectarians, for the sole reason that their fathers were such before them. They have been educated to believe certain religious dogmas, and "just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined." No one is to blame for his honest belief; and Swedenborg instructs us, that every one's early religious opinions should be sacredly respected, and that the Lord Himself never wishes violently to break such opinions, but to bend them only with the utmost gentleness and moderation. In fact, all the religions that ever have existed have been needed in the world's progress, and had the Lord violently destroyed those churches which he permitted to prosper, something worse would have taken their

place; or man's freedom would have been destroyed, which would have been infinitely worse still. The Lord protects every person's freedom, as the most tender parents would protect their children's very eyes.

That all may have freedom, the Bible has been given to us in a language of correspondences, that no person may be forced to believe what he does not wish freely to accept. The perfect meaning of the Word of God lies concealed in Its Internal Sense, though the Words of Jesus are "Spirit," and "Life," and they appear throughout the Bible as the pure metal appears upon the surface of the gold-bearing quartz of California.

The external or literal reading of the Bible sometimes apparently contradicts itself, but the Internal and True meaning is never contradictory, but always perfectly harmonious. All the sects of Christendom find abundant passages of Scripture, which, understood literally, fully substantiate their peculiar dogmas. For instance, the Roman Catholic reads the 16th chapter of Matthew, and finds abundant proof in verses 16, 17, and 18 that Christ appointed Peter the first Head of the Christian Church; and in the 19th verse of this chapter, and the 23d verse of John xx., he also finds proof that Peter and his successors were authorized to forgive sins. The good Catholic also finds John vi. 48 to 58, perfect literal proof that the sacramental bread and wine are miraculously transformed into actual flesh and blood.

The Calvinist rejects the literal meaning of

these verses, but finds the terrible doctrine of foreordination in the literal sense of other passages of this same chapter. The Shaker and the Catholic Priest feel it their duty to follow the advice of Paul, as laid down 1 Corinthians vii. 1; but the Mormon replies, that David, and Solomon, and hosts of other Old Bible saints, had a plurality of wives, and polygamy is nowhere forbidden in the Bible. Said an honest Mormon once to me, "Show me a single passage in the Christian's Bible against polygamy and I will give it up." I quoted many passages, which he "explained away" as easily as a Universalist explains away hell, or a Methodist explains away the injustice of eternal burnings; and, he concluded, "If God is the Author of the Bible, and polygamy is a sin, why does not some simple verse state plainly that a Christian shall not have but one living wife at a time?"

I replied, that all men may have freedom, and be individuals, and be responsible for all the deeds done in the body, and choose of their own free will and accord right or wrong, light or darkness, good or evil. Why is it that Modern Spiritualism and Infidelity are outrunning Christianity in point of numbers, and the Philosophers and learned Sceptics, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, are continually repeating, in their orations, that "Christianity is almost as dead as Paganism?" Why are Roman Catholic Churches taking the place of the Congregational Meeting-Houses of New England, and of other Protestant sects throughout the country? Why are

the purest, the most refined and educated among the Methodist denomination continually uniting with the Roman Catholic Church, quite often stopping at the half-way house of the Episcopalians for change of baggage? It is because the Internal Meaning of the Bible is rejected, and the letter only is preached by too many of the Methodists and other Protestant sects. "For the letter killeth." No intelligent person living will honestly deny but what the 16th chapter of Matthew and the 6th chapter of John, accepted literally, will fully establish the two leading doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Why, then, do so many Protestent ministers misrepresent, misquote, and deny Swedenborg's explanations of the Scriptures, and hide from them, just as owls and bats hide from the light of the natural sun? Why does the Internal Meaning of God's Word disturb these persons, just as water disturbs men and dogs, and other animals suffering from hydrophobia? It is because such ministers are hirelings (see John x. 12 and 13), and for other reasons to be found in the 23d chapter of Matthew; and they continually cry — "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" or some other equally mercenary, dogmatic falsehood.

With permission from the proper authorities, I copy from The New York Daily Sun the following dialogue between a "Methodist raised" reporter and Mr. Thomas Hitchcock, omitting only a few introductory words of the reporter. The article from the Sun is as follows: —

HEAVEN, EARTH, AND HELL.

SWEDENBORGIANISM TURNED INSIDE OUT.

A Sun Reporter Learns the Philosophy of Going to Hell — Also the Difference between Angels and Devils and the Rest of Us — Also what Becomes of Babies that Die — And how Things go on in Heaven — And how the Lord takes the Nonsense out of Fools — Something about Ward Beecher and Bishop Clarke.

A Sun reporter having been sent forth to find out what Swedenborgianism is, and what its teachers and upholders are driving at, he betook himself to the Cooper Institute, where he remembered to have seen a sign hung out, stating that the fountain of pure theological truth was flowing hard by, and inviting all to come and slake their spiritual thirst, without money and without price. Having arrived at the Cooper Institute, we, the reporter aforesaid, discovered that Room 20 was the fountain in question, and venturing therein, we inquired who was the head man of the sect hereabouts, as we wanted to find out what the Swedenborgian doctrines are. To which a gentleman replied: —

"There is no head man in our sect; that is to say, there is no one whose lead we follow without question. We all think for ourselves, although, of course, some are more familiar with the writings of Swedenborg than others."

"Do you understand the doctrines?" we asked.

"I do. I have studied them about twenty-two years."

"Suppose I interview you, then?"

I have no objection."

Will you oblige me with your name?"

"My name is Thomas Hitchcock."

"Are you known among the Swedenborgians pretty extensively?"

"I am pretty well known among them."

"Very well. I'll now begin the interview, if you please."

"Go ahead," said Mr. Hitchcock.

THE INTERVIEW.

Reporter. Well, what are you Swedenborgians driving at?

Mr. Hitchcock. We think we have the true science of religious truth, and want to teach it to the world.

Reporter. Science of religious truth! Do you mean to say there is any science in religious truth?

Mr. Hitchcock. We mean to say, and we do say, that religious truth is as capable of scientific arrangement and explanation as any other truth, and that we are able to give this scientific explanation. The Swedenborgian theology bears the same relation to all other theologies that the Copernican system of astronomy bears to the Ptolemaic, the Arabic, the Hindoo, and the Chinese systems of astronomy. Those systems of astronomy were based on the mis-

taken appearances of things, whereas Copernicus and his followers got at the realities. Just so other systems of theology are based on appearances, while the Swedenborgian system is based on the real truth.

Reporter. What do you mean by "appearances"?

THE KEY TO SWEDENBORGIANISM.

Mr. Hitchcock. I mean the way that things appear to the senses. For example, the sun appears to rise and set, and to go daily round the earth. The sky appears to come down to the earth all around, forming what we call the horizon. The earth appears to be stationary in the centre of our universe. The sun appears to be a small orb, not a millionth part as large as the earth; the planets seem no bigger than marbles; and the fixed stars appear to be mere twinkling points. All these appearances are controverted by science, and the senses have to yield to reason. It is the same in spiritual and religious matters, which abound with fallacious, misleading appearances, and these appearances have to be corrected, and in the Swedenborgian system of theology are corrected by spiritual science.

Reporter. That all sounds very well, in a general way; but let us get at something specific. What do you say, for example, to the doctrine of total depravity? I used to know a pious old lady, when I was a boy, who was strong on that doctrine, and who always closed every argument on the subject by saying, "Well, when you take away my

TOTAL DEPRAVITY,

you take away all my religion!" What do you say to that?

Mr. Hitchcock. Our doctrine as to that matter is, that all human beings are born with sinful inclinations, but need not commit sin unless they choose to do so, and are not accounted guilty of sin unless they do actually commit it.

Reporter. Then you must hold that all children that die before they reach the age of moral accountability go to heaven, no matter how wicked or heathenish their parents may be.

Mr. Hitchcock. We do, most emphatically; it is a monstrous error to suppose otherwise.

Reporter. But if no babies whatever go to hell, what becomes of the doctrine of infant damnation?

Mr. Hitchcock. I'm sure I can't say, unless it goes to hell instead of the babies, as it certainly should.

Reporter. But if the doctrine of total depravity is not true, what need have we of a Saviour?

Mr. Hitchcock. To save us from our sinful inclinations, and from actual sin committed by every one personally.

Reporter. How did He, or how does He do that?

Mr. Hitchcock. It is not easy to tell, off-hand, how He does it. In order to explain it, it is necessary, in the first instance, to explain our views of the intimate connection between this world and the spiritual world, including both

HEAVEN AND HELL.

Reporter. That is just what I want to get at. Please go ahead.

Mr. Hitchcock. The spiritual world is not remote from this world, on some unknown planet, as is commonly supposed. It is right here; close to this world, and within it. When a man lives a good life, he draws angels and good spirits, who inhabit the spiritual world, near to him; if he lives an evil life, he draws evil spirits and devils around him.

Reporter. What is the difference between a good spirit and an angel, and an evil spirit and a devil.

Mr. Hitchcock. A good spirit is a good human being who has passed from this world, but has not yet become an angel. An angel is a good human being who has been perfected in the spiritual world up to the status of angelhood, and been thereby elevated into heaven. An evil spirit is a wicked human being who has passed from this world, but has not yet become a devil. A devil is a wicked human being, who, having passed into the world of spirits, has blossomed out into full-blown devilhood, and gone to his home in hell.

Reporter. You talk about the

WORLD OF SPIRITS

as though it were a place to which good and bad spirits go in common, previous to their being sent to heaven or hell.

Mr. Hitchcock. Yes, the world of spirits is an intermediate state between heaven and hell. It is

where we all go immediately after death, before we are finally sorted out and disposed of according to our real characters. Now, to come back to the spirits which a man draws around him in this world by his life, and on which I must predicate my explanation of the work of salvation which the Saviour did for us. By the instrumentality of good spirits and angels, the Lord is always trying to save us from the machinations of evil spirits and devils. But when the whole human race is unspeakably wicked, as it was at the time of the Lord's appearance on earth, special efforts to this end are necessary. At the time of the Saviour's advent, the evil spirits and devils had got such a hold upon men as to take possession, not only of their minds and hearts, but of their bodies also, as we read in the Gospels, and the instrumentality of angels and good spirits was not sufficient to resist them. The Lord, therefore, came Himself down to the plane of human life, and on that plane fought with His own omnipotence against

HELL

and its allies, drove them back, and thus saved men from destruction.

Reporter. Do you mean that it was God Himself who did this?

Mr. Hitchcock. Yes, I do. There is but one God. The Son of God is the name given to His manifestation of Himself here on earth, and the Holy Spirit is the holy influence that proceeds from Him.

Reporter. What becomes of the vicarious atonement then?

Mr. Hitchcock. The vicarious atonement, as expounded by old-fashioned theologians, is a misconception of the truth, just as the Ptolemaic system of astronomy was a misconception of astronomical facts. It rests upon the assumption that God was angry with His creatures, and needed to be pacified, and would not let up on the offenders until somebody had been adequately punished for their offences. God's alleged anger is an appearance produced by our guilty conscience. The truth is, that God

LOVES THE SINNER

just as much as He loves the saint, and always seeks the sinner's good. To remove this appearance of anger, it is only necessary for us to repent of our sins and turn to the Lord; just as, to come from night to day, it is necessary for the earth to turn, and not for the sun to change its position. The sun shines on just the same all the time, whether it be hidden by clouds or shut out from us by the earth's turning away from it; and so, too, does the Lord's love shine on just the same all the time, no matter how it may be obscured by the clouds of evil, or shut out of our hearts by our turning away from the Lord. So you see that redemption was a deliverance from the powers of hell, to enable us to turn again to God, and was not a deliverance from the wrath of God, as that phrase is usually understood. The work which the Lord

did in redemption was indeed vicarious. He did in our place what we could not do for ourselves. Atonement, again, means reconciliation — or, as it is sometimes spelled, at-one-ment; and it is we who are reconciled to God, and not God to us. He does not need any reconciling, but we do; because it is we who have

GONE ASTRAY.

It is we who must be brought back. To repeat our astronomical illustration, there is no change in God any more than there is in the sun; it is the earth which must turn in order to receive the sun's heat and light.

Reporter. All the preachers say the same thing — that we must turn to the Lord and seek salvation. Is your way of doing that different from theirs?

Mr. Hitchcock. I will not attempt to state their method, but will only tell you what ours is. Our way of turning to the Lord is to repent of one's sins, pray to the Lord for help, and above all, to keep the commandments.

Reporter. That seems to be Orthodox. I was brought up a Methodist, and that is just what they preached. There does not seem to be much practical difference, after all, between you and the rest of the religious world.

Mr. Hitchcock. I should be very glad to believe that that was so. The use of all religion is to make good men and women on earth, and angels in heaven. So far as the Methodist, Catholic, or Mo-

hammedan religion can do that, it has my hearty sympathy. Indeed, Swedenborg teaches that, in the providence of the Lord, believers of all forms of religion are saved, if they only live good lives, according to their religious precepts.

Reporter. What is the advantage of your form of religion then over others?

Mr. Hitchcock. The advantage consists in being free from the errors and misconceptions which embarrass and mislead believers in other systems.

Reporter. What errors and misconceptions do you refer to?

Mr. Hitchcock. That of God's being angry with us, and demanding a victim to appease

HIS WRATH,

for example, and the consequent misconception of the real nature of the atonement, the trinity of three distinct persons, the doctrine that heaven and hell are arbitrarily given by the Lord, and are not the result of eternal laws; these, and kindred errors flowing from them, puzzle and confuse people's minds, and prevent them from doing as well as they would if they knew the truth.

Reporter. If the Lord does not send a man to hell, who does send him there?

A SWEDENBORGIAN STUNNER.

Mr. Hitchcock. He goes there of his own accord, and because he likes it better than he likes any other place.

Reporter. That's a stunner. If you will enable me to comprehend that, and to see that it is true, you will contribute much to my peace of mind.

Mr. Hitchcock. How so? Would it contribute to your peace of mind to see that if you should ever become an inmate of one of those loathsome hells of the Fourth or Sixth Ward, — say a negro dance-house, — it would be because you had become so degraded that you would go there, and live there, and make your living by living there, from pure love for such a life?

THE REPORTER FRIGHTENED.

Reporter. Merciful heavens! The very idea makes my soul turn sick.

Mr. Hitchcock. Very well; then how can it contribute to your peace of mind to see and believe that if you go to hell from the world of spirits it will be because you will have become so vile and loathsome in all the attributes of your spiritual nature that you will prefer the society of devils to that of angels, and the wickedness and corruption of hell to the purity and holiness of heaven?

THE REPORTER CAVES.

Reporter. Come to reflect upon it, I do not think my peace of mind would be re-enforced by such a belief. But I want you to explain how people go from the spiritual world to heaven or to hell.

Mr. Hitchcock. Before I do that, tell me what your idea of heaven is.

Reporter. Heaven is the eternal home of the redeemed; it is the home of never-ending rest; it is a place of eternal happiness.

Mr. Hitchcock. What makes heaven a place of happiness?

Reporter. Why, God makes it so, of course.

Mr. Hitchcock. But how does He make it so? In what does the happiness of heaven consist?

THE REPORTER'S IDEA OF HEAVEN.

Reporter. Why, in being happy, I suppose. And the redeemed are made happy by contemplating the glories of their Redeemer; by singing endless praises to Him; by wearing golden crowns and robes of spotless white, and roaming those sweet fields which, as the old Methodist hymn says, beyond the swelling flood stand dressed in living green.

Mr. Hitchcock. That is to say, the happiness of heaven, according to your views, consists in having what might be termed a never-ending religious holiday, with nothing to do except to sing praises to God, and feast on what you call heavenly delights?

Reporter. Yes; that is about it.

Mr. Hitchcock. How would you like that here on earth? How would you like to stand in a temple or a garden for years, wearing a white robe, and with a gold crown on your head and a gold harp in your hand, and with nothing to do but to sing psalms? Or, to put it briefly, how would you like to live in everlasting idleness here, if you could?

Reporter. It would be intolerable, of course. It would kill me, or

DRIVE ME CRAZY.

Mr. Hitchcock. Exactly: just as it has killed or driven crazy many a man who, having amassed wealth, and foolishly imagined that it would be heaven on earth to live in splendor and idleness, has supplied himself with a luxurious home, and quit business to enjoy it. Does not every such man find out his mistake?

Reporter. Yes. I went up to Connecticut last year and interviewed one of those very men. He had an earthly paradise, but the devil was in it, in the shape of idleness; and the poor rich old man told me he was going to start an orphan asylum, and run it himself, just to have enough to do to keep him from going crazy or committing suicide.

NEW IDEAS ABOUT GOING TO HEAVEN.

Mr. Hitchcock. You have hit it exactly. Activity is a law of life. Idleness leads to stagnation, and stagnation is death. Every man must be active. A good man wants to be all the time doing something useful; an evil man wants to be all the time doing something harmful. The old gentleman that you interviewed in Connecticut, being a good-hearted man, his irrepressible craving for activity burst out in a charitable direction, and he founded an orphan asylum. If he had been a bad-hearted man, his activity would have taken an evil direction. In the

spiritual world, every one has the same passions and desires that he had here. The good spirits seek to be useful, and the bad spirits seek to gratify their evil dispositions. The same laws govern the coalescence of the inhabitants of the world of spirits into societies or communities which govern the same thing here. In this world the vicious seek out and consort with the vicious, and the good seek out and consort with the good. Take the people who arrive in this city, for example, on any given Saturday night and Sunday morning, from all parts of the country. They are here relieved from the conventional restraints which keep them in order at home, and every one is free to gratify his appetites at his will. You understand such things, and very well know that many of those persons who, if at home on that Sunday would go to church, and exhibit a deal of

HYPOCRITICAL PIETY,

will go to the haunts of vice in this city, and scoff at religion, and wallow in wickedness. Every one of them who loves the company of the vicious, will seek out vicious companions, and go where he will enjoy himself most. On the other hand, those who really love the Lord, and in their very hearts want to do the right thing wherever they are, will seek out some church on that Sunday, or will in some way show out and act out the love for the Lord and his people which dominates their lives. So, when people arrive in the spiritual world, where all con-

ventional restraints are removed, every one acts out his real nature. The wicked gradually sort themselves out from the good, and gravitate by choice to the hells. A hell is simply a society in which wickedness holds entire sway; and the worse the wickedness, the worse the hell.

Reporter. But how about the punishment for sin? Is not hell a place of torment? and if it is, why do even the wicked like to go there?

Mr. Hitchcock. Why do the wicked go from choice into the

HELLS OF THIS WORLD,

and voluntarily accept the loss, disgrace, ruin, disease, suffering, and death, which come of going there? People are the same in the world of spirits that they are here; that is to say, they are human beings. Suppose you and I should be struck dead this moment, and pass into the spiritual world. You would be you, wouldn't you, and I would be I? We should have the same spiritual natures which we have now. You would like there what you like here; and it would be the same with me. If we really love God and our neighbor here and now, we should love God and our neighbor there and then. If we love what is pure and holy here, we should love what is pure and holy there. But if we really in our hearts love self, and the world, and evil and wickedness here, we should love the same there, no matter what we may pretend to love here. And loving wickedness, we should go among the wicked,

because we would prefer to do so. And being among the wicked, we should, of course, have a wicked and unhappy time of it, and grow worse and worse, and become

VERY DEVILS,

and be tormented by our own burning passions and by our fellow-devils, and suffer unspeakable anguish; and yet we would prefer that devilish state to heaven, just as the human devils in this world prefer their horrible life and surroundings to the society of good Christians.

Reporter. I understand how it must naturally be as you say; but still I do not see where the punishment which God inflicts on sinners for the sins they committed in this world comes in.

HOW SINNERS GO TO HELL.

Mr. Hitchcock. The Lord does not punish people hereafter for deeds done in the body. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." In the Lord's dealings with his creatures there is no such thing as punishment, in the sense in which that word is generally used, but only philosophical consequences. If you take hold of hot iron, it burns you. The burning is not a punishment, arbitrarily inflicted, but only a natural consequence. If a man eats anything poisonous or hurtful, the inevitable consequence follows, and his body is injured, or perhaps his life sacrificed. So, too, if a man commits sin, his soul is injured, as a spiritual consequence; and

by continuing in sin, he comes to love it, and his soul gets such an appetite for it that he continues sinning in the world of spirits, and grows in wickedness, and finally goes to hell as a spiritual consequence of his sins, just as a drunkard finally goes to a drunkard's grave, not as a punishment arbitrarily imposed upon him for his offence, but as a physiological consequence of his excessive indulgence in strong drink.

Reporter. Do men go to heaven on the same principle?

HOW WE GO TO HEAVEN.

Mr. Hitchcock. Precisely. By cultivating during this life love to the Lord and to the neighbor, a good man, with the Lord's help, acquires the habit of enjoying the exercise of his good affections, and in the other life seeks the society of companions of a like character. It is easily seen that a community of people, all loving and obeying the Lord, and all loving one another, and trying to do the greatest possible good to one another, must make a heaven wherever they may be.

Reporter. What chance is there for doing good to your neighbors in heaven? Doesn't the Lord give your neighbors all they want there, without your help?

TOO MUCH SWEETENING.

Mr. Hitchcock. He does not do it any more there than He does here. You must remember that our

happiness comes through the right use of the faculties which the Lord has bestowed upon us. To exist in heaven as a sort of spiritual oyster or sponge, with the Lord pouring molasses over us to all eternity, would be altogether too sweet and stagnant to be wholesome. The Lord works by instrumentalities in heaven the same as He does here. For example, He here uses the relation of husband and wife, of parent and child, of teacher and scholar, to bring into activity, and to gratify our deepest and tenderest affections; and it is only in this way — that is, by the exercise of our affections — that we can get any development.

Reporter. Do you mean to say that there are the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, and teachers and scholars, in heaven?

HOW BABIES ARE PROVIDED FOR.

Mr. Hitchcock. I do. There are husbands and wives in heaven, as there are on this earth; and though no children are born there, yet the children who die in this world, and who all go to heaven, have to be brought up and educated to adult age. So, too, the ignorant good people among Christians, and the good among the heathen, who all go to heaven, have to be instructed there. And, in fact, what do the wisest of us know in comparison with the angels who have been in heaven for thousands of years? As arrivals there are incessant, there is never any cessation of the work of instruction. Hence there is the exercise of the parental office, and

the relation of teachers and scholars. Did it never occur to you to imagine what has become of the myriads upon myriads of infants that have died and gone into the world of spirits? Do you suppose that infants that died five thousand years ago are kept bottled up somewhere as infants still? Are all the infants that have died, and that are dying, and that will hereafter die, to be kept for ages upon ages in an infantile state, and then be finally judged as infants, and sent to their doom as infants, and kept as infants — myriads of them not an hour old — throughout eternity? Do you suppose there is to be any such waste of immortal material as that? Is it not more reasonable to suppose that infants grow up in heaven, and become intelligent beings there? Is it not also reasonable to suppose that the Lord, in the exercise of His infinite love and wisdom, has made provision for their care, and comfort, and instruction? It would be justly considered an act of

ATROCIOUS CRUELTY

to send countless babes off to some distant land, without making any provision for their welfare when they should arrive at their destination. And is there any reasonable religious being on earth who would dare to imagine that the Lord has not made ample provision for the welfare of all His little ones that go in their helplessness to the unseen land?

Reporter. All the mothers will be apt to accept your doctrine as to the fate of babies in the other

life. It looks reasonable. But if Swedenborg's views are correct, it strikes me that a great many good Christians are foredoomed to disappointment, and will not find the heaven they longed for.

Mr. Hitchcock. There you are mistaken. Swedenborg expressly says, that every good person, on his first arrival in the world of spirits, finds exactly the heaven he believes in.

Reporter. Why is that?

TAKING THE NONSENSE OUT OF THEM.

Mr. Hitchcock. To take the nonsense out of him. You know when a confectioner takes on a new apprentice, he always tells him he may eat just as much candy and confectionery as he likes. The apprentice, of course, gives full swing to his appetite, and in a few days becomes so disgusted with candy and confectionery that they are forever after intolerable to his palate and stomach. Just so, when people imagine that heavenly happiness consists in endless worship, or singing, or sitting on beds of flowers, or roaming in paradisiacal gardens, or feasting with the patriarchs, or merely getting into a place called heaven, they are allowed to try it on, till they become so disgusted that they want to break jail, and escape to some place where they can find something useful to do. They are then instructed that heaven consists in performing uses — doing useful things — in the name of the Lord; and right glad are they to learn that lesson. The essence of heavenly

delight is the doing of good to others, and not the selfish gratification of one's own desires. Swedenborg says that the angels not only love the neighbor as themselves, but better than themselves, and find ineffable delight in ministering to their neighbors. That is in accordance with the teaching of the Lord while on earth: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matt. xxiii. 11.)

Reporter. But what do angels find to do in heaven?

Mr. Hitchcock. Everything that good men and women would find to do in a perfect state of society on earth, with, of course, such exceptions as grow out of the difference between the material and the spiritual worlds. Some are teachers of religious truth to new comers from this world. Some, particularly women, take care of infants and children. Immense numbers are engaged in watching over us who still live here in this world, and as many, if not more, in ameliorating the miseries of the inmates of hell. It is there, as it would be here in a community of good and benevolent people, — each one does what he is best qualified for to promote the general welfare and happiness.

WE SHALL KNOW EACH OTHER THERE.

Reporter. Will people know each other there?

Mr. Hitchcock. Yes; but if that knowledge is only of the outward seeming, as it often is in this world, and not of real interior character, it will soon

pass away, because there, everybody at length has to show his real character. No hypocrisy is possible there. Hence, unless people have an interior affinity for one another, they do not remain together in the spiritual world.

Reporter. How many Swedenborgians are there in the United States?

Mr. Hitchcock. Something over five thousand, I suppose, who call themselves New Churchmen. But there are thousands who receive the doctrines, who do not avow it. We have about a hundred societies, and seventy ministers. We have a church in this city, in Thirty-fifth Street, and one in Brooklyn, at the corner of Clark Street and Monroe Place. There are also societies in Jersey City, Newark, Orange, Poughkeepsie, Mount Vernon, and Riverhead.

Reporter. Do you administer the usual ordinances?

Mr. Hitchcock. We administer the rite of Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, and carry on our worship very much like other Christians. We are liberal in our notions as to other sects, and wish them all God speed. The fact is, the New Jerusalem is coming down out of heaven among men in all parts of the world, and in all denominations. It has transformed the theology and the preaching of Christendom within a century.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

preaches more of the essence of the New Church

doctrines than some of our own ministers. Bishop Clark, of Rhode Island, does the same. By the essence of our doctrines, I mean love to God and the neighbor carried out in actual daily life, by keeping the commandments, both in their letter and their spirit.

Thus ends the "Sun" article. One more question should have been asked by the Reporter, viz.: Which of Swedenborg's books would you recommend to a beginner? and I would have replied, The "True Christian Religion" to a Christian, for that was the last of the writings, and is simplest, and plainest, and best of all. But to a philosopher, I would say, read "Heaven and Hell" first; but a philosopher only should *read* it — common minds must study it, just as they study geography, grammar, arithmetic, or algebra. Weak brains need not bother with it; neither need those theologians described by Paul, in 2d Timothy iii. 6, 7, 8. Such poor hirelings say Swedenborg was insane, or, perhaps, obscene in some of his writings; but ask them to read the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis; and they will probably reply, "*Never! in the presence of gentlemen; such parts of the Bible were written expressly for the ladies and the clergy.*" That eminent philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his book called "Representative Men," mentions six persons only, representative of the human race, viz.: Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Napoleon, and Goethe. Emerson says Swedenborg is

"one of the missourians and mastodons of literature." He also says, "Not every man can read his works; but they will reward him who can!" He finds only one fault with him. Swedenborg "was a bishop's son," and his education made him a Christian. O, Emerson, would to God thou also wert a Christian!

Poor, earnest, honest John Wesley was too busy fighting the dogma of "foreordination" to see Swedenborg till it was too late. After Swedenborg had passed away, John Wesley was imposed upon, lied to, deceived, and made to believe that the great author was at one time insane; but Wesley himself was thought to be insane by multitudes of people; even Paul was accused of the same infirmity; and so was Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself (see Mark iii. 21). Was Swedenborg infallible? I hope not; for Heaven's sake, I hope not; for "there is none good but one, that is God," and His Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God.

After turning several doctrinal sommersets regarding perfection, John Wesley finally concluded there was a perfection pertaining to men, and another pertaining to angels; but that God alone is absolutely perfect. But in spite of John Wesley, the great mass of the Christian world still continue to believe in only one kind of perfection, and the other qualities they prefer to call by other names; for "a rose by any other name smells just as sweet." In conclusion, I would say, Enoch of Bangor, your Pond may drown a few insects, but honest, intelli-

gent minds are not influenced by such one-sided special pleadings against the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Thou didst write a book, Enoch, and thou seemest to have borrowed thy arguments from Thomas Paine's Age of Reason, without giving Thomas the proper credit. On page 25 of thy book thou dost ask why Swedenborg did not tell us all about undiscovered planets, &c., &c. Thy brother Thomas Paine asks these same questions about Jesus Christ and the New Testament writings. On page 120 of thy book thou tellest what is not true; and "thy whole book is as full of errors as an egg is full of meat." Did Paul go to hell, poor Enoch? If so, he went as a missionary, even as the Lord Jesus Christ went to preach to the "spirits in prison" (see 1 Peter iii. 19); and Paul, or some other good man, may go there again to open thy poor blind eyes, and thou mayest yet be saved, even as Jonah was saved out of the belly of hell, if thou art only ignorant and honest, and dost not persistently sin against the Holy Ghost. Read my "History of the Bible, Its Nature and Teachings," and then pray God to heal thee of thy great blindness, or forgive thee of thy great wickedness.

Honestly, truthfully, and for Jesus' sake,

I am thy friend,

ALBERT COLBY.

No. 3.

WHICH IS BEST?

LIGHT OR DARKNESS, TRUTH OR ERROR?

HONEST HISTORY, OR FALSE FABLE?

CHOOSE YE, BUT FIRST READ THE FOLLOWING

TRUE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE,

ITS NATURE AND TEACHINGS.

"All Truth is divine."

For Jesus says, "The Truth shall make you free." *John* viii. 32.

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." *John* xiv. 6.

"For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth." *John* xviii. 37.

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THE HOLY BIBLE:

ITS HISTORY, NATURE, AND TEACHINGS.

BIBLE means Book; and the Sacred Scriptures were first called Bible by John Chrysostom, in the early part of the fifth century.

To the Hebrews or Jews was first committed the care of the Sacred Writings, and for many ages they were in a manner confined to that chosen people. There was then no need of translations into other languages; yet was the providence of God particularly manifest in their preservation and purity. The Jews were so faithful to their important trust, that, when copies of the law or the prophets were transcribed, they observed the most scrupulous exactness; they not only diligently compared the one with the other, but even counted the number of letters in each book, and compared and recorded the numbers, and every jot and tittle was made to correspond exactly with the original.

The first translations that were made of the Old Testament were after the Babylonish captivity. They are called the Targums, which word, in the

Chaldean language, signifies Translations. They are also often called the Chaldee Paraphrases. Some of them are exact translations of different parts of Scripture; others are properly paraphrases, containing enlargements, explanations, and even additions. Several of them are yet extant, and they are often mentioned by the ancient fathers of the Christian church. Some have affirmed that the five books of Moses and that of Joshua were translated into Greek before the days of Alexander the Great. But the most remarkable translation of the Old Testament into Greek is called the Septuagint, which, if the opinion of some eminent writers is to be credited, was made in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about two hundred and sixty years before the Christian era. At any rate, it is undoubtedly the most ancient that is now extant, and on many accounts deserving notice, though not to be put on a level with the Hebrew text, as has been sometimes done.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek; and no sooner was the gospel spread through the nations, than it was found necessary to translate the inspired writings for each into its proper tongue. Some translations of the Old Testament, different from the Septuagint, were made into Greek from the year of Christ's birth 128 to 200. It is generally believed that the church of Antioch was favored with a Syrian translation of the Bible as early as the year 100. The Ethiopians of Abyssinia have a version of the Bible, which they ascribe to Frumen-

tius, of the fourth century. Chrysostom, who lived in the end of the fourth, and Theodoret, who lived in the middle of the fifth century, both inform us that they had the Syrian, Indian, Persian, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Scythian versions. The ancient Egyptians had the Scriptures translated into their language. The Georgians have a version in their ancient language. The most ancient German translation is supposed to have been made by Ulphilas, A. D. 360. The Old Testament of all these translations, except the Syrian, is taken from the Septuagint, and not immediately from the Hebrew text.

We will now give some account of the translations of the Bible into the English language. There have been some who have affirmed that Adelme, Bishop of Sherburn, who lived in the beginning of the eighth century, translated the Psalms into the Saxon tongue. That, however, is uncertain, as some of the best historians make no mention of it; yet it is possible, as he was a man of great parts, and of great learning for those times, and said to be the first Englishman who wrote in the Latin language. About the same time, or a little after, Bede, commonly called the Venerable Bede, translated some parts of the New Testament, some say the whole Bible; but that is not probable. Near two hundred years later, King Alfred translated the Psalms into the same language. In 1382 Wiclif finished his translation of the Bible, which is yet extant; that is to say, there are copies of it in some public and

private libraries. All these translations were made from the Vulgate. In the reign of Henry VIII. several editions of the Old and New Testaments were published in English; one of the most remarkable is that of William Tyndal, in 1530. The translation of the New Testament was made from the original Greek, but probably the Old Testament either from the Latin of the Vulgate, or the Greek of the Septuagint. This was soon followed by the improvements of Coverdale and Mathews. By order of the king, Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, and Heath, Bishop of Rochester, made a new translation, which was published in 1541; but, not pleasing Henry, it was suppressed by authority. In the reign of King Edward VI. another translation was made; two editions of which were published, one in 1549, and the other in 1551. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth another translation was made, which, being revised by some of the most learned of the bishops, went by the name of the Bishops' Bible. This professed to be translated from the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New, though, in some instances, when there was a difference, it preferred the Septuagint to the Hebrew.

This last circumstance, with some others, induced King James I. to select fifty-four persons, eminent in learning, and particularly well acquainted with the original languages in which the Old and New Testaments were written, to make a new translation of the whole Bible. In the year 1607, forty-seven

of those persons, the other seven probably having died, assembled together, and arranged themselves into committees, to each of which a portion was given to translate. They were favored not only with the best translations, but with the most accurate copies and the various readings of the original text. After about three years' assiduous labor, they severally completed the parts assigned them. They then met together, and while one read the translation newly formed, the rest had each a copy of the original text in his hand, or some one of the ancient versions, and when any difficulty occurred they stopped, till by common consultation it was determined what was most agreeable to the inspired original. This translation was first published A. D. 1610, and is the one which has been ever since that time printed by public authority, and generally used in the British dominions, as well as in the United States of America. It may be added with safety, that it has been generally approved by men of learning and piety of all denominations, of which its having never been superseded by any other, for over two hundred and sixty years, is a sufficient proof.

This translation of the Bible contains sixty-six Books; thirty-nine in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New.

	Old Testament.	New Testament.	Total.
Chapters, . .	929	260	1,189
Verses, . . .	23,214	7,959	31,173
Words, . . .	592,439	181,253	773,692
Letters, . .	2,728,100	838,380	3,566,480.

The "Douay Bible" (Roman Catholic) has seven additional books, called by Protestants "Apocryphal," and the third chapter of Daniel contains only thirty verses in the Protestant Bible, but one hundred in the "Douay," and other considerable parts of the "Catholic Bible" are left out of the Protestant or English version.

This translation was made in France, by Dr. Gregory Martin and three assistants, at an English College established at Douay for the purpose of educating English boys in a Roman Catholic country. For certain reasons this college was moved to Rheims, where the New Testament was first published in 1582. Afterwards they moved back to Douay, and first published the Old Testament there in 1609. The Roman Catholics publish quite a large volume of what they call errors in the Protestant Bible; but Protestants reply by saying they have at least as many errors in their own translation, and that some of them are apparently wilful errors, and that they prohibit the common people from reading even their own translation of the Scriptures; but it is hoped the Roman Catholic clergy will not much longer forbid their own people to possess and read the Roman Catholic Bible, for any translation is better than no Bible.

There are about three thousand different languages in the world, and about one thousand different religious sects, and it would be impossible for any human power to translate all the books of the

Bible into all those different languages, to suit all those different sects; consequently different translations and commentaries are expected by all intelligent Christians; and as comparatively few are well versed in the original Hebrew and Greek, it is by comparing these translations and commentaries, and exercising our common sense and reason, that we are enabled to form our opinions regarding all the teachings of the Sacred Scriptures; though the Ten Commandments, and all the sayings of Jesus, seem so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. I never saw a translation of these parts of Scripture which was not plain enough for my understanding.

The nature of the "Inspiration" of the Bible is a matter not fully agreed upon by Christians of eminent learning and piety. Some believe that the whole language of the Bible is perfectly inspired in the original tongues; while others believe that the ideas only are inspired, while the language is human and fallible, requiring the deepest study of most eminent scholars to explain the true ideas of the writers. Others, still, say neither the language nor the ideas are inspired, but the men themselves were inspired. Professor Calvin E. Stowe, formerly of Andover, Massachusetts (Congregational Trinitarian), expresses this last opinion. Such may be the case with some of the books, including Paul's Epistles, but Emanuel Swedenborg says the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him, and showed him that

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Revelation, in the New Testament, and twenty-nine books of the Old Testament, are the Perfect Word of God, without a fault or a mistake in the original languages, and that the writers were only instruments in the hands of God, just as a pen is an instrument in the hands of any writer; and that every chapter, verse, and syllable of these thirty-four books contains internal meanings, which will be the study of angels to all eternity, while the writers, in their times, understood only the external or natural meanings.

The apostle Paul recognizes an internal meaning of the Scriptures in Galatians iv. 23–31, and in other places, especially when he says "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The twenty-nine perfect books of the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of the Kings, the Psalms of David, the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. All the other books of the Bible are just what they pretend to be, and are, doubtless, as nearly perfect and as worthy of our veneration as Dr. Stowe, and thousands of other preachers and teachers, regard any part of God's Most Perfect Word. Josephus tells us the Jewish Scriptures were divided into twenty-two books; that also being the number of letters in the Jewish alphabet. All Christians

agree that the Words of Our Lord, as recorded in the New Testament, and the Ten Commandments, written upon tables of stone by the Lord Himself, as recorded in the Old Testament, are the plainest and most precious parts of the Bible, and compared to the rest, are like the purest of diamonds, in gold and silver settings. "God is love," and hell itself is no worse than this world would be if the best half of its inhabitants and the BIBLE were taken away. Some persons imagine that Swedenborg rejects Paul's epistles, in the same sense that the Protestant Churches reject certain books of the Roman Catholic Bible; but this is a great mistake. Swedenborg continually quotes from the epistles of Paul, and accepts them for just what they claim to be, and regards them as highly as the apostle Peter did in his time; for Peter says, in the third chapter of his epistle, that in brother Paul's epistles "are some things hard to be understood."

The most intelligent clergymen, of all denominations, at the present day, read and study Swedenborg's explanations of Scripture. Only the bigot confines his reading and study to the writings of his own sect. Adam Clarke, in the preface to his Commentaries, says, among the Catholic writers many valuable commentaries are to be found, which he enumerates. Swedenborg says what he wrote he had directly from the Lord, and that he was used as an instrument to explain the Word of God. He never added a word to the Bible, or took anything

from the Bible. He never organized a church, or attempted it, but he wrote at the command of the Lord explanations of the Bible, which he published with his own money, and gave away to colleges and to clergymen of different denominations. Bigoted hirelings, who preach for pay the doctrines of sects instead of the commandments of God, — who think more of a few peculiar forms and ceremonies than they do of all the sayings and teachings of Jesus, — accuse Swedenborg of rejecting Paul's epistles. Paul's writings are very valuable, for he wrote near the time of our Saviour, and had opportunities to see our Lord's immediate followers; but there is no evidence that he ever saw the Lord himself while in the flesh. Paul's espistles are just what they pretend to be; but they are not to be compared with the words of Jesus. He spake as "never man spake." He "spoke by authority, and not as the scribes." But Paul says (1st Corinthians vii. 6), "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment."

Paul wrote, in his epistles, as follows: "That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were, foolishly;" "I speak as a fool;" "I speak foolishly;" "I lie not," &c., &c. Paul was not converted till after the day of Pentecost, and he assisted in the murder of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Jesus had finished His work on earth, and had ascended to glory. He had perfected the Temple of his Body, and had assured his followers

that all power was given Him in heaven and on earth before Paul was converted. Yet some preachers, who claim to be Christians, take more texts from Paul than from Jesus; and others, still, take more texts from Paul than from all the rest of the Bible. Such should be called Paulists instead of Christians. Jesus says (John v. 39), "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." But He does not refer to Paul's epistles, for they were not then written. When Jesus refers to "Moses and the prophets," He refers to higher authority than Paul, for God spoke through them His most perfect word, but Paul spoke of himself — his own honest opinions. Let any candid person compare the language and style of Moses and the prophets with that of Paul, and they must see at once the one is human and the other divine. Moses says, "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God." Isaiah commences, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken," &c., &c., through all the prophets. Paul never pretended to have any such authority, but continually disclaimed it. Paul never said, Believe on Paul, or Apollos, or Silas, or any other man; but "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Who is the Lord Jesus Christ? Many persons, calling themselves Christians, believe he was the natural son of Joseph. So thought Christ's dis-

ciples at first. We read (John i. 45), Philip said to Nathanael, "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." But Jesus was of higher origin than Joseph. He is called, in the Bible, the son of Joseph, the son of David, the Son of Man, and the Son of God; and Emanuel Swedenborg is the only writer who fully explains all these terms perfectly clear and with harmony; and I beg all, who may read this little book, to procure Swedenborg's True Christian Religion. It will do for you what Philip did for the Ethiopian: it will preach to you Jesus. By the blessing of God it caused the scales to fall from my eyes, and it gave me faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Swedenborg's writings first showed me that Jesus is God, our Creator, our Heavenly Father, in the form of a man. That is to say, the Soul of all things, the Lord of Light and Glory, took upon Himself a human form, and lived a life of poverty and sorrow, and allowed Himself to be derided, spit upon, and crucified, by wicked men, that He might bring life and immortality to light, and conquer death and hell, and save a lost world. And Paul says, "God was manifest in the flesh." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But Paul was human, and sometimes made mistakes; and he says he sometimes spoke "not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly."

So let us turn to the words of Jesus, for "they are spirit and they are life," — and He never made a mistake. Jesus says, "There is none good but One." "I and my Father are One." "The Father is in me, and I in him." "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father, also; and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him." And after the resurrection, "Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And in Revelation, we read, in the first chapter, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore." And to make this perfectly clear, about the same words are repeated in the last chapter of Revelation, and the following, with others, are added: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

Can any person believe these words of Jesus to be true, without concluding, in the language of Dr. Adam Clarke, that "Jesus of Nazareth is the True God"? There appeared to me so many contradictions in the Bible, that I could not believe it until I read Swedenborg, and found all these contradictions were only apparent, but not real — simply paradoxes, that could be perfectly explained. Moses and

the prophets repeatedly foretold of One God only, who should take upon Himself a human form; but for want of space, we will only quote a few passages. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord." "Hear, O Israel, I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Such is the language of the five books of Moses. The following are among the many passages to be found in Isaiah: "Therefore, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour." "*There is* no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Our Lord also says, in Hosea xiii. 4: "I am the Lord thy God, · · · and thou shalt know no God but me: for there is no Saviour beside me."

This same God is Jesus; for Jehovah God, or The Lord God of the Old Testament, is the same identical Jesus Christ of the New Testament; and it is just as absurd to call the soul and body of a man

two men, as to call God The Father and Son two Gods.

Jesus is not an advocate, a mere attorney, a pleader for criminals; for He says He is the Judge —"King of kings, and Lord of lords." He has "a name above every name;" and there is nothing, known or unknown, visible or invisible, above Jesus, who is the Triune God, for He is Creator and Ruler of all. God is a Triune Being, just as man is; for man is created in the image of God. The body of a man, the soul or life of a man, and the will or love of a man, form one whole and complete man, and not three men, or two men. So the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit form One whole and Perfect God, and not three Gods, or two Gods. How beautifully John says, in his first epistle, "For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." And how sweetly the Gospel according to John commences: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Paul not only speaks of soul and spirit (Hebrews iv. 12), but soul, body, and spirit (1 Thessalonians v. 23). Every human being is a trinity, in the image of our Creator and Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Some ask, Why did Jesus pray to the Father? But we may also ask, Why did David address his own soul so often? "Why art thou cast down, O

my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me?" Why do all persons in trouble say, "O my soul, what shall I do?" In our Lord's parable (Luke xii. 19), He refers to a man talking to his own soul as follows: "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry." If Jesus, the "Temple," or Body of God, had not addressed Himself, or the Soul of All things, as all men in trouble address their own souls, then would the Bible have been unfinished, and we should not have the perfect proof that God has created us in His own Image. The soul of every man is *father* to his body, in the following sense: *The soul*, — that is to say, the life, the love, or the works of a man, — shapes his face and head, and moulds the whole man, and he will carry through this life, and beyond the grave, and to all eternity, upon his forehead, the mark of The Lamb, or of the beast, as described in Revelation; and his own conscience, his own memory, his own life can be read from the man himself when the books are opened, and the dead shall be judged "according to their works." (See Revelation xx.) The Lord did not make the world in one day, neither did he make his own body in one day, or in one year; but wise men and angels worshipped the Babe of Bethlehem; for in Him was destined to dwell "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Years afterwards, when He stilled the waves of the sea, and raised the dead, — when the Jews said, "Herod will

kill thee," He replied: "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow; and the third day I shall be perfected." But after His perfection, after His resurrection, He informed His disciples that all power was given Him in heaven and in earth.

Let us, then, pray to Jesus, just as sinking Peter prayed to Him, and just as the blind men by the wayside prayed to Him, and just as the thief on the cross prayed to Him. Suppose a governor of a State is also a merchant, and the father of a family. If you want to marry his daughter, you address him as the father of her you desire; if you want to get trusted for goods, you address him as a merchant; but if you are a criminal, you address him as governor; but still he is only one man. So God is one, yet having many names, — for there are three thousand different languages in the world. But Jesus is the highest name of all! He is all the God that ever was seen, or ever can be seen, and the only Being who ever hears and answers prayer. And when we address "Our Father, who art in heaven," we address Jesus; for He says, "I and my Father are one." While our Lord was upon the earth He had two natures. He had His own nature from the Father, and a human nature assumed from Mary; and He was speaking from this human nature when He said, "The Father is greater than I;" and He said that before His perfection, before the Temple was completed, before in Him dwelt all the fulness

of the Godhead bodily; yet it seems quite consistent with all the rest of His sayings if we understand it in the sense that the soul is greater than the body or temple, or at any rate was, before the temple was completed. His life on earth perfected the Temple of His Body, and His human nature was made wholly Divine, and all the infirmities of the human race, inherited through Mary, were overcome, and the last remnants crucified, and God in Christ is NOW the only object of Christian worship — King of kings, and Lord of lords.

What is God The Father? Many persons among all the sects on earth believe God is a Principle — The First Great Cause — The Original Cause of all causes and all effects; and this belief is justified from the Lord's Prayer, and the whole Sermon on the Mount, where the expression, "Our Father WHICH" art in heaven, is repeatedly used; and if God were a person, say the creedists, the word *who* should be used. The Creed or Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church says, on page fifteen, "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts." The Presbyterian, and most other so-called Evangelical churches, use about the same language in their creeds, yet a majority of their members do not believe this. They actually believe that God the Father has body and parts, and they speak and pray about His right hand and His left; His eyes and ears, and other parts; though their creeds say, and their leaders believe, He has neither

"body or parts." The creeds all say that the Father and Son are one, yet the great rank and file believe they are two individuals (contrary to all Scripture); and they speak and pray about Jesus being at the right hand of God, while their creeds state distinctly that God has no right hand, neither "body or parts."

Swedenborg says God is a substance, and the only real substance, or essence, which fills the universe; that preserves all things, that created all things, and out of which all things were created, and in which all things exist. He is a Spirit; the life, and the only true life, of the universe; but Swedenborg says this Essence, this Spirit, this Life of the Universe, and the whole universe of God itself, has the form of a man, and human beings are made in the image of God and of the universe. The Bible says, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." He is everywhere. We read in Psalm cxxxix.: If we ascend up into heaven, He is there, or if we make our bed in hell, behold He is there. The All-seeing Eye of God is always upon us, and nothing can hide from His presence. The prophet Amos says (ix. 2): "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." That He is the only First Cause and Supreme Ruler of the entire universe, the Bible clearly teaches from beginning to end. Moses of old desired to see this God, this Creator and Ruler of the

Universe, but was told that no man could see God and live. How could a finite being see the Infinite that fills all space, and all space doth occupy? The best and purest people of all countries and ages, like Moses, have desired to see God. God's most precious and purest jewels, among all nations, have most desired to see God. The nearer a person has lived to God, the more earnestly has he always desired to see Him. Hence the origin of images or idols. The principle of love, so powerful that men and women have always been found ready to suffer, and even die for those they love, was recognized by the ancient heathen as a sort of First Cause, and worshipped as a god, named Venus. Images and paintings were made of the form of the heathen ideal of what this Principle, or God, ought to be, temples were built to her honor, and from the Cause or Principle originally worshipped by the philosophers, the lower classes learned to worship the image only. The Cause of Wars — the passion or the emotion which led armies to battle and to death — "The Sweet Madness of Battle" was worshipped, and an image of the Cause, or God of War, was made, and "Mars," in the form of a man, was adored by the heathen. So it was with the cause or principle in wine, that cheers, and intoxicates, that too was deified, and an ideal image made, called Bacchus; and so with other causes, principles, and emotions, deified and worshipped by the ancient heathen. They all wanted to see some form cor-

responding to their ideal of every cause. But beyond Wine, Women, and War, and everything else that mortals could comprehend, was a First Cause that they could not comprehend. They saw the effects of the Cause that created and ruled all other causes, and this Principle, or Power, they feared and worshipped as "The Unknown God." (See Acts xvii. 23.)

Paul says, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you;" — and Paul preached Jesus. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "God was in Christ" — like the soul in the body of a man. What God's children, in all ages, have most desired, God provided for them, and ordained it, and brought it about. "He bowed the Heavens also, and came down." "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men." (Revelation xxi. 3.) The Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, took upon Himself a Human Form, or Body, or Temple (Isaiah ix. 6), and Jesus is the Body of God, as God is the Soul of Christ. They are one, like the soul and body of a man, never to be divided. They are two, like the soul and body of man, but never to be divided. "The Father is in Me, and I in Him," saith Jesus.

You may find, in all Roman Catholic churches, an image of Jesus, as a babe, and a larger image of Mary, the mother of Jesus. But Jesus is not now a babe — He has risen from the manger, and has

passed through all the stages of human life, and has conquered death and the grave, and is now Lord of lords and King of kings. The Roman Catholic Church, and all those Protestant Churches that have risen out of the Roman Church, persist in seeking the living among the dead — they worship Jesus as He was, but not as He is. If the women who sought Jesus in the tomb, needed angels to instruct them, — "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen," — how much more do the sectarians of to-day need that God should raise up a man like Emanuel Swedenborg to explain the true meaning of the Scriptures? "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Sectarian hirelings are preaching, for pay, literal nonsense, scientific falsehood, and unreasonable impossibilities. They feed the people upon the letter of the word, which, like the burr of a nut, has no life of itself, but inside of the burr is a shell, and inside of the shell is the nut — the real meat, the food that supports life. The Shakers and Mormons, the Advents and Methodists, the Sects established by John Calvin, and John Wesley, and John Murray — believers in a material hell, and in a mental hell, and in no hell at all; believers in a hell, out of which the wicked will be, some day, restored; believers in a hell, in which they will be burnt up, or annihilated; and believers in a hell, in which the wicked will be forever tormented and never die — all claim to get their doctrines from the same Bible,

and to worship the same Christ: but this cannot be true. As our Lord foretold that false Christs should arise to deceive many, we must conclude that some of the above sects worship a false Christ, and that they cannot understand the real truth of the word of God. Jesus says, in the sixteenth chapter of John, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

"Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." Never was this promise of Jesus fulfilled LITERALLY, until, directed by our Lord Himself, Swedenborg wrote "Heaven and Hell," and the "True Christian Religion." In a spiritual sense it refers to God's own Holy Spirit of love, but not in a literal sense.

As soon as the world was ready for a true explanation of the internal meaning of the Scriptures, God raised up Swedenborg for the work. How many professed Christians worship the Lord Jesus Christ as He is now, perfected, arisen, Lord of lords and King of kings? Ah, how many rather worship a false Christ; for, as our Lord foretold, many false Christs have arisen. Whoever goes to the tomb for a dead Christ, or goes behind and back of the tomb for a man of sorrows, worships a false Christ, just as much as the Roman Catholic, who bows before the image of a helpless babe. Jesus

said to the weeping women who followed Him to the cross, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." So Jesus says to-day to those so-called Christians who meet regularly to weep and exhort, with the sorrowful countenance of a Don Quixote. Why weep and talk about Jesus as a man of sorrow? Has He not risen, ye poor, blind mourners?

Better spend your time in doing good — feed the hungry, clothe the naked, watch with the sick, do good any way, if you want Christ's approval. What are your works? What fruit do you bear? These are the questions Jesus will ask, when rewarding us all according to the deeds done in the body. Read the "Words of Jesus, and then wipe your weeping eyes," for it is easy to be a True Christian; for Jesus says His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

What is the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit? The Roman Catholic, and all other churches which sprung from the Roman Catholic Church, say the Holy Ghost is a person, or a sort of a third-rate God; but the Bible nowhere mentions anything of the kind. That is a pagan doctrine, handed down by the Roman Catholics to the present time. As the old heathen Romans personified human love, which they called Venus, so the daughters of the Roman Catholic Church personify the operation of God's Love, and call it an individual, to whom they pray; but the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, is not a person; it is an essence, a principle, a power. It is

what God breathed into Adam. It is what Jesus breathes into all His followers.

We read in the twentieth chapter of John, after Jesus arose from the tomb, He appeared to His disciples, and "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Nowhere in Scripture is this operation called a person. It is in the creeds, but in them only. Jesus is the Triune God, "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Whoever says Jesus is only the Son of God, must reject Moses and the prophets, and they really deny Jesus, as much as ever Peter did. Solomon is called, in Scripture, the Son of God. In Job we read of many Sons of God. The wicked antediluvians are called Sons of God in Genesis vi. 2, and Adam is called the Son of God in Luke iii. 38. If Jesus is only the Son of God, and Mary was His mother, and Adam is the Son of God without any mother, is not Adam made greater than Jesus? Any intelligent person who will give the writings of Swedenborg as much study as they have given to grammar, or arithmetic, or geography, or any other scientific subject, will understand the nature of the Bible; but without these writings the Bible is a sealed Book, and blind "mystery" will be preached.

The Teachings of Jesus are plain. Simply do right. Do as you would be done by. He says in His Sermon on the Mount, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:

for this is the law and the prophets." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Belonging to a church neither makes nor unmakes a person a Christian. Counting beads, like Roman Catholics, and saying prayers in Latin or English, and speaking in meeting, are all on an equality. But doing good, watching with the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, doing for others what you would have them do for you, if your circumstances were reversed, is what pleases our Father in Heaven, who "is good to all" (Psalm cxlv. 9), "For He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." (Luke vi. 35.) Jesus says, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" and over and over, from Genesis to Revelation, we are told to "keep the commandments." We must live pure lives, for to all eternity a life awaits us corresponding to the life we live in this world; but whoever does as well as he knows how, does well enough; for the Lord only asks us to account for the talents given; and He says, "Whoever knoweth not his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with few stripes." The Bible clearly teaches that all honest people go to heaven, but dishonest people, be they church members or not, are hypocrites, and a dark future awaits them. Yet such is the wonderful love of God, that the vilest person living, or that ever did live, will have as comfortable a future as

his nature will permit. Not what a man professes to think, but what he honestly does, meets the approval of Our Father in Heaven. The apostle James says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Some foolishly think that Paul teaches, that a person may be justified by Faith without good works; but Paul refers only to the Jewish ceremonies, spoken of in Mark vii., but not to the Ten Commandments, and He distinctly says (Galatians vi. 7), "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" and in 1 Corinthians xiii. 13, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity." Better preach charity without faith, than faith without charity; that is to say, we had better preach "do right" than "think right;" but better still, to think right and do as we think. John the Baptist preached Repentance, and Jesus Himself preached Repentance before belief; and Our Lord, everywhere, in speaking of the Last Judgment, refers to our works, and not to our opinions. (See the parable of the sheep and the goats.) Not what people thought, but what they did, decided their position in that parable. (See also Revelation xx. 13.) Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Pure-minded people, who do as well as they know how, will finally reach Heaven, no matter what their opinions.

The most eminent theologians, of all denomina-

tions, admit that all the pure-minded among the heathen, who never heard the name of Jesus, will go to Heaven, just as infants go there. Our Lord says, if we know not His will, and do it not, we shall be beaten with few stripes; but they that know His will, and do it not, are the ones that shall be beaten with many stripes. These are they who sin against the Holy Ghost. If good people go to Heaven, and bad people do not (some may ask), what is the use of Faith? What benefit do we derive from it? A person who has faith is in heaven. Faith is Salvation. The pure in heart will finally reach Heaven; but, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are in Heaven.

The purer any person lives on earth, the more he needs Faith; the harder a person tries to do right, the more he feels lost without Faith in Christ — like a man lost in the woods, or upon the ocean, without sun, star, or compass, so the man seeking to do right, moves round and round, without advancing, till Christ appears. Faith saves, if it is Bible Faith, but Faith without works is the faith of devils, who believe and tremble. Faith without works is like a bird with one wing. It is not True Faith. It is a spurious, galvanized coin, perfectly worthless at the toll-gates of Heaven. Charity and Faith must go together. Repent and Believe, says Jesus. Repentance and Faith are the two angels that led Lot out of Sodom. They are the Two Tables of Stone given to Moses. They are the Moses and

Aaron that led Israel out of bondage. They are the Caleb and Joshua that led them into a land flowing with milk and honey. They are the Two Witnesses, killed and raised to life again, as recorded in Revelation xi.

Any person who tries to do right, and whose heart is honest before God, is not far from the kingdom of Heaven. That is a state of true repentance — a turning from nature to grace; and add to that person Faith in Jesus as the God of Heaven — Lord of lords and King of kings; Who regards the fall of every sparrow, and Who numbers the very hairs of our heads; to Whom all things are known, the smallest as well as the greatest; from Whom comes all good, and by Whose permission all evils are permitted, to prevent greater evils, and to preserve man's freedom, and that Faith is saving. Such a state is Heaven. Such was the Faith of Daniel in the Den of the Lions. Such was the Faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Such was the Faith of all the martyrs who went to Heaven through a fiery death of the material body. Such is the Faith of all True Christians. They are always contented and always happy.

The apostle John says, in his 1st Epistle (chapter v.), "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," but believing Jesus is the "Anointed," implies obeying Him; that is to say, "keep the commandments," — and they are all easier kept than broken. God's commandments are all made in

perfect love, and for our present as well as everlasting good. Solomon, the wise, says, in Ecclesiastes xii. 13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God and keep His Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." And our Lord Jesus Christ says, "The first of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is One Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the First Commandment." "And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

What is the New Birth? "Mystery," says the Roman Catholic Church, and "Mystery" repeats all the daughters of that mother of churches. (See Revelation xvii. 5.) But the New Birth, Jesus makes as simple as the wind that blows. Only the Roman Lady and her daughters preach Mystery. The Religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is no mystery; it is simply the Golden Rule — old as the race — equal with God. Jesus says, "Before Abraham was I am." Human beings are naturally selfish. Alexander the Great conquered the world, and then wept for other worlds to conquer. Swedenborg says nothing would satisfy the ambition and natural desire of any unregenerate human being but to own the universe and conquer God.

Whenever any person submits to God, and honest-

ly says, "What suits God suits me," and tries to do just as he would be done by, that person has a change of heart, and is turned from nature to grace. That person is born again; Jesus has breathed on him, and the loves of self and the world are conquered, and love of God and the neighbor are his ruling loves, and the kingdom of heaven is within him, and hell is cast out. Heaven and hell are states (not places), corresponding to daylight and darkness. Daylight is not a place, it is a condition. (See Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.) Sudden changes of heart are not apt to be lasting. A person may start suddenly on a journey, but a steady walk is better for a long journey than a fast run. Sudden starts are good, and sometimes hard jumps from impending danger are very necessary, but the journey of life must be performed in a regular manner.

The apostle says, First the blade then the ear and then the full ripe corn. Jesus says, The kingdom of heaven is like leaven hid in three measures of meal; the whole subject of a new life is fully explained by Jesus Himself; but were He to come again, and live over the same life He led while on earth, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, few if any of the churches of the present day would receive Him. Were He to appear in a modern noisy prayer meeting, and repeat the sixth chapter of Matthew, "Away with Him" would be demanded by the shouting worshippers. The difference between a noisy religion and the True Religion, is fully described,

1 Kings xviii. 17, &c., and chapter xix. concludes the subject. (See especially verses 11, 12, and 13.) Compare the fasting, as preached by hireling priests, and that recommended by Jesus. (See Matthew vi. 16, &c.; see also Isaiah lviii. 6.) Noisy, ignorant preachers may have been as necessary in the world's development as Pagan, Mohammedan, and Papal teachings; but the Newman Halls, the Spurgeons, and the Beechers of the present day are the bright morning stars in the dark horizon of old theology, and the changes and improvements they are trying to establish in their respective denominations indicate that the Sun of Righteousness is about to arise upon a priest-ridden world.

The days of hireling preachers, of old sectarian dogmas, will soon be over, for the New Jerusalem is coming down from God out of Heaven, as foretold by John the Revelator. Henry Ward Beecher has already dared to say from his pulpit, that no person is to blame for his honest belief, and not an infant, or an honest man, or an innocent person can be found in all hell. The Baptist Spurgeon advocates an open communion; and well he may argue that the Lord Jesus Christ made the most Holy Bread that ever was broken, and gave it to the multitude. He also made large quantities of wine at Cana of Galilee for the multitude, and at His Last Supper, which was the First Most Holy Supper; unbelieving Thomas was there, swearing, lying Peter was there, and devilish traitor Judas was

there, and the Lord Himself gave them of the feast; and dare any mortal man refuse the Sacrament to any who desire it at the present day? The priest or minister should always say, "This is the Lord's Table, and all who feel that He invites them, are welcome." Wherever these words (or their equivalent) are used, I always partake, and wherever they are not used, I do not feel invited.

Whoever refuses one of the least of God's children, refuses the Lord Himself. Antipodal Sectarians get their hire for distorting and deifying Paul's Epistles; but if Paul, in 1 Corinthians xv. 28, contradicts Isaiah ix. 6, 7, all True Christians will give Isaiah the preference; for, as I have before stated, Paul nowhere pretends to claim the authority which Isaiah had, and the authenticity of what Paul is supposed to have written is infinitely below what Isaiah wrote.

Appleton's American Cyclopedia says (vol. 3, page 229), "Not a fragment of writing from the hand of an evangelist or an apostle survived the early generations that used the original manuscripts, and wore them out." They did not feel the importance of laying them securely aside, as the Jews did their Sacred Writings, but the more valuable the New Testament writings, the more extensive their use, and consequently the briefer their existence. For the changes made in these writings during the dark ages, and down to the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, see the valuable work above mentioned. No tribe of Levi was set apart to guard

the New Testament writings, and count, with the most costly care, every letter, jot, and tittle of every copy made; but the forty-seven learned men, who translated our present English Bible, found multitudes of Greek copies of Paul's Epistles, and they made a compromise of the various readings, and no single Greek version is equal authority to the good old English compromise that has been in use more than two hundred and sixty years.

Many of the Sects of the present day are dissatisfied with our present English New Testament, and they translate the whole or a part of some favorite Greek version that appears better to uphold their peculiar dogmas. The Universalists, Second Advents, and many others, do this in the form of commentaries, but the Methodists have sold many editions of an independent translation of the entire New Testament made by John Wesley; and the Baptists are about publishing a new translation of the whole Bible, by an Association called the "American Bible Union," of New York; but I would advise them all to read Swedenborg's explanations of Scripture, instead of bothering about new translations. Swedenborg says Moses and the prophets, in the internal sense, treat exclusively of the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom, and the last chapter of Luke proves this. (See especially verses 27–44, 45, &c.) I have not used the language of Swedenborg in this work, but that of Moses and the prophets, and whoever rejects them will reject Sweden-

borg; but the Ponds and the Pikes, and all other sons of the woman spoken of in the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, are proofs of the Truth of Christ's words as recorded Luke xvi. 31: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Moses and the prophets repeatedly say there is but one God. Isaiah says (xliii. 10, 11): "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour."

Swedenborg confirms the words of the prophets, and proves how reasonable and beautiful they are, even perfection itself as originally written; and can we expect that hirelings, who preach a doctrine of three personal Gods, and Jesus the second person of these three, will not reject Swedenborg? There is something in the Bible to correspond to every part of a human being. This is necessary, or it would not be perfect; and hirelings, who never dared to read the thirty-eighth chapter of Genesis in public, are wicked enough to call Swedenborg vulgar for writing twenty times less homely truths.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our best Friend. He is our Creator, our Heavenly Father, Who bowed the Heavens also, and came down; and behold the Tabernacle of God is with men. He places good and evil before us that we may have freedom, and may choose the right, and avoid the wrong. Temptations are necessary, that we may have need to pray

to be led out of temptations, and delivered from evils. As a loving parent wishes to bless his children, and make them as happy as possible, so our Heavenly Father loves to bless us, and give us all the happiness we will accept from Him; but in order that we may have freedom, the Lord permits evils; for if no evil was permitted of the Lord, then man could not have freedom, or intelligence, or be a man, but must, of necessity, be a fixture, an object, a mere thing. So let us all try to do as well as we can, for a life in the future world awaits us corresponding to the life we lead here.

Time with each one of us will soon end, and then we will be in eternity, where all who have the spirit of a Lazraus will enjoy Blessed Peace forever, but they who abound in self-righteousness, and are rich in their own religious views (living a life of selfishness or wickedness, like Dives), must forever abide with those who will be tormented with their own wicked natures. Their own selfish loves and wicked desires will attend them to all eternity, for take away from wicked people all their wickedness, and they would be annihilated. "God is Love," and hell would be just as good as heaven if the inhabitants were the same. In heaven all are free to do just as they please, for they all love to do right. In hell wicked people are compelled to perform uses, and to do comparatively right; but law, force, and punishments are necessary to keep bad people from injuring each other, and the Blessed Loving Jesus

makes all in hell as comfortable as their evil natures will allow.

Read Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, and his True Christian Religion, carefully and prayerfully, and they will help you to understand The Holy Bible. No subject was ever so high or holy but what it could be ridiculed by unbelievers, if no opportunity was given for explanation or reply. Even the words of the Lord upon Mount Sinai, and the birth of the Lord in a manger, have been ridiculed by infidels. But the Bible is the Perfect Word of God, and it will be the study of angels to all eternity. Every person should read it through, at least once, by course. Read twenty-three chapters every Sunday, or three chapters every week day and five every Sunday, and you will read it through in a year, and seven chapters besides. Psalm cxvii. is the middle and shortest chapter, and John xi. 35 is the smallest verse. Wherever in this world the Bible is not read and believed, there women are bought and sold like cattle, and human beings live about as vilely as the most filthy animals.

Christian Ministers of all Denominations : — In concluding, I appeal to you. I hope I have not written this book as a sectarian, but rather as a humble servant of "Our Lord Jesus Christ;" and He is saying to-day to all The Pure, The Faithful, and The True among all denominations of Christians throughout the world, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Almost nineteen hundred years ago John forbade a person to cast out devils, "because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part." Christian Ministers of to-day, whom do you follow, John or Jesus? Read what I have here presented, honestly and candidly. Do not be hypocrites. (See Matt. vi. 2, 5–16; also, xxiii. 13–15; also, xxiv. 51.) To have our "portion with the hypocrites," is to go to hell. Be honest, for "God is not mocked." You profess to have been called of God to preach the Gospel. Perhaps I may be pardoned for saying I too have felt compelled, against my wishes, and the earnest advice of my nearest earthly friends and relations, to cry out with Paul, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel." Let us not find fault with each other, but turn to God, like Paul, and say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" No two persons are alike in

looks, thoughts, or actions, and ministers of Christ have no right to judge each other; by our fruits we may be known; but there is only one lawful Judge, and even He says, "I judge no man." "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." But His Words, that is to say, the Truth, shall judge us all in the last day. I desire to follow the Lord only, and to be one of His most humble and obedient servants. Like Paul, I am willing to dispute in the "market daily," or anywhere else that the Lord shows me work to do; but, like Paul, I must be free. He says in the 1st chapter of Galatians, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother." It seems that Paul was converted while Peter and most of the other apostles were still alive; but Paul was not dictated by them. He even "withstood" Peter "to the face, because he was to be blamed" (see Galatians ii. 11); and if Paul did not need to sub-

mit to Christ's chosen Apostles, I need not be dictated by the sectarians of the present day any more than they need be subject to me. When Peter asked the Lord what John should do, He replied, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." In this same last chapter of John the Lord repeatedly charged Peter, "Feed my sheep." He says the same to us. Jesus is the "True Shepherd," and we are either His true servants, or else we are only false hirelings; wolves in sheep's clothing. When John the Baptist sent to Jesus to ask if He was the Christ, the Lord did not reply directly, but said, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." And He concludes this eleventh chapter of Matthew as follows: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Ministers should try to be practical. Poor people cannot feed upon theories or moonbeams. It is all very well to make tracts and give them away; but do not forget to make bread also, and give that away with the tracts.

Jesus preached free to all, and then He made bread and gave that away without money and without price; and we read, "The common people heard Him gladly." When He raised Jairus's daughter

from the dead, He "commanded that something should be given her to eat." Jesus says (Luke xiv. 12, 13, 14), "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors: lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Our Lord says truly, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

Politicians pay out immense sums of money to feed their constituents. Before election all parties forget "Maine Laws," and even the poor Irishman's shanty is free from State Constable search and seizure. "Eat, drink, and be merry," say the politicians, "for to-morrow we die, politically, unless you vote for us." Why do not "rich Christians" make to themselves friends of the "mammon of this world?" Why do they not feed their converts? Why not get up feasts, and rides, and picnics for all children and "newly converted" persons as soon as they can repeat the "Lord's Prayer" and the "Ten Commandments?" Try it, Christians. Try it, for the time may come when Jesus will say to you, "For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying,

Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." (Matt. xxv. 42–45.)

These words have a literal meaning as well as a spiritual. (See Swedenborg's True Christian Religion, Nos. 433 and 434.)

Jesus was practical. He was born in a manger.

"Who is He in yonder stall,
At whose feet the shepherds fall?
'Tis the Lord, O, wondrous story,
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory!
At His feet we humbly fall,
Crown Him, crown Him, Lord of all."

He learned of Joseph the carpenter's trade, and worked at it the most of His life.

"Who is He in yonder cot,
Bending to His toilsome lot?
'Tis the Lord, O, wondrous story,
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory."

He worked freely for others, and bore our infirmities, and even washed His disciples feet. He also bore His own cross and our sins and those of the whole world. He told the story only once of the poor widow who gave her last money to the church, and that was not till after she had given it; but there is no record that He ever passed around a contribution box to gather up "poor people's pennies" in all

His life. I have no objection to clergymen receiving pay for their services, like school teachers, or legislators, or policemen; for Paul says, "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel;" but Paul also says that he worked with his own hands, lest he might be chargeable to his brethren. Jesus is higher authority than Paul, and He warns us against hirelings; and when a man preaches for pay, and stops preaching when the pay stops, is not he a hireling? I have felt it my duty to spend several years of my life in preaching, writing sermons, and distributing Bibles, Testaments, and other good books, sometimes at cost, sometimes at less than cost, and sometimes giving them away at my own expense. I have always preached free to all; if ever I become penniless I shall take money for preaching, but not till then. In the language of Paul, I will add, I say this "not of commandment," and some may think I had better also add, "I speak foolishly;" but He who has a name above every name, is my Judge and yours. Not the Babe of Bethlehem NOW, or the "Man of Sorrow," but the Risen Jesus, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, the Almighty. Not Jesus as He was, but as He is: the Temple of His Body Perfected, Consummated, Finished.

"Who is He that on yon Throne,
Rules the World of Light alone?
'Tis the Lord, O, wondrous story,
'Tis the Lord, the King of Glory.
At His feet we humbly fall,
Love Him, serve Him, Lord of all."

Ye well-fed, well-paid, regularly-ordained preachers of the Seven Churches of the present day, does not Jesus repeat to some of you the Words of Revelation? "I know thy works." . . . . "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. . . . He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

No. 1.

WHICH IS BEST?

GOD'S WAY, OR THE DEVIL'S WAY?

CHOOSE YE, BUT FIRST READ

BELIEVE AND RECEIVE;

OR, THE

PLAIN AND EASY ROAD TO HEAVEN.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." *Rev.* xiv. 13.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." *Rev.* xx. 12.

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PREFACE TO PRESENT EDITION.

When I wrote and first published this little book, I only claimed to begin to see men as trees walking. (See pages 3 and 4.) From Methodist, and other "evangelical" Christians, my book received the warmest praise; but a constant and prayerful study of God's Word, during the past few years, has somewhat changed my mind regarding one of my opinions. While a member of the Methodist Church I honestly thought a noisy religion commendable and profitable (see page 37); but in my undeveloped state I mistook apparent truth for Real Truth. Our Wonderful Counsellor, whose highest title is Prince of Peace (see Isaiah ix. 6), says, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." It is "within you." The kingdom of God, or kingdom of Heaven, Jesus says, is like seed cast into the silent ground, or like leaven, which a woman hid in three measures of meal (see Matthew xiii. and Luke xiii.). Read 1 Kings xviii., and see the difference between the short prayer of one true servant of the Lord and the noisy demonstrations of the prophets of Baal and of the groves. See also verses 11, 12, and 13 of the next chapter.

The shouting Jews, at Jericho, were a wicked set. The Hebrew race was always cruel and revengeful. They stoned the prophets and killed them, and their descendants murdered the Lord Himself. So I have sometimes found the most noisy professors of religion to be the greatest hypocrites and rascals, and too often their children fill prisons, and other bad places. I would not be understood to say that noisy religious exercises are absolutely sinful, but rather that the still small voice is a better and more heavenly manifestation. When our Lord was crucified, where were

the shouters that attended his triumphant entry into Jerusalem? Perhaps it may be necessary for uneducated, ignorant people to make noisy demonstrations in attempting to worship God, but there is a higher state of religion than the noisy kind. An orderly, quiet, peaceful, righteous life is what best fits us for the eternal presence of the Prince of Peace.

With honest motives I united with the M. E. Church. I was led so to do by Methodist clergymen, who claimed to believe in only one God, and that the prophecy of Zechariah xiv. 9 was literally fulfilled in the Methodist Church; but to my sorrow I found that a majority of Methodist ministers persistently preached the doctrine of three Gods, and continually repeated the old pagan Fable that the anger of one God demanded the death of another as a sacrifice or an atonement. Consequently I asked for, and received an honorable discharge from their body. I never would have left the Methodist Church if my brethren had preached Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only God of Heaven. That such was the faith of the early apostles, is abundantly proved from the Book of Acts.

After Jesus arose from the dead, He charged His disciples to baptize all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (see last chapter of Matthew), and they continually baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, proving they believed Him the Triune God, in whom Paul says, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. See Acts ii. 38; viii. 12 and 16; x. 48; xix. 5. See also my History of the Bible, at close of this work, and Swedenborg's explanations of Scripture, especially his True Christian Religion.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book ~~is~~ was originally written and published for gratuitous distribution among my own personal friends and acquaintances, for the following reasons: I was in my thirty-ninth year when I was converted to Jesus. When I started in life, I promised my Creator that one tenth of all my gains should be devoted to charity; but becoming confirmed in Unitarian and anti-Christian views, I actually took the Lord's tenth and gave it to the devil. I bought the writings of Thomas Paine and Theodore Parker, and gave them away as a deed of charity, actually thinking I did God service. I thought I was a very good man, and that I was keeping God's commandments, and was on the road to heaven; while I was going down to hell blindfolded, just as fast as the devil's omnibus could carry me. But on the 23d day of April, 1865, the words of Jesus reached me, "Why persecutest thou me?" and I had abundant evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ was my Creator and Saviour. I believed on him for the first time in my life, and he breathed on me, and scales have been dropping from my eyes ever since, and I begin to see men as trees

walking. I am on my journey to that celestial city whose maker and builder is God; and if this selection of Scripture may lead one erring soul home to his Father's house, then I will be doubly happy, for I have had many sweet seasons of prayer and praise while writing the book. I have read the Bible through by course once since commencing it, and Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentaries, Cruden's Concordance, and the Bible have been my constant companions. I have had many seasons of shouting aloud in my closet, Glory to Jesus! and I have seen light and evidences perhaps improper to mention. I know the Bible is the Word of God, and that all men by nature are great sinners, and none more blindly depraved than I have been; but I can say with Paul, "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." God's Word tells us, It shall be well with the righteous, but ill with the wicked from beginning to end; and we can confirm the Bible by nature and reason if we wish; but if we turn our backs upon Jesus, the devil stands ready to confirm falses and teach lies, for he is the father of lies.

Don't reason teach us that men become angels of light or darkness just as naturally as worms become butterflies and other winged insects, and eggs become birds, both clean and unclean? Hogs and other filthy animals eat carrion in the ditches, and think sheep and lambs very silly, foolish creatures for eating grass and flowers upon the hills and the mountains. So wicked men and devils look upon good men and angels. It is an old proverb that one's

meat is another's poison. Tobacco is very offensive to the taste of nearly all of those unaccustomed to its use, yet how fond of it are its consumers! I know persons who are always made very sick by tasting some particular kinds of food; for instance, to taste of strawberries will make some people vomit; bees' honey has the same effect upon others; and few people can be found but what have a dislike for some kinds of food greatly admired by others. So heavenly joys would distress the inhabitants of hell. No person would enjoy a summer ramble or a winter sleigh-ride without proper clothing. Any man would be better off in a badly-ventilated cellar, with a good fire, than to go shooting, entirely naked, on a cold day, where game was ever so plenty. So the spirits of the damned are better off in hell, no matter if it is too hot, than to go to heaven unclothed with a garment of righteousness. Put on the wedding garment, or you will be speechless when you stand before the Lord Jesus. You will call for the rocks and the mountains to fall on you and hide you from the face of the Lamb. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Jesus there is perfect peace.

It is estimated that the population of the globe is about one thousand millions, speaking over three thousand different languages, and having over one thousand different forms of religion; that thirty-five thousand millions of men have died by war, and unknown millions have died by famine and pestilence. What millions of children have died by contagious diseases, to which children only are subject, and how

quick a generation passes away, and how few comparatively live to be old! Don't these things teach us that this world is not our home? only a potter's field, where the form is cast and we are moulded for eternity? And how soon we pass on where the filthy shall be filthy still, and the righteous shall be righteous still! After the vessels are finished, so they remain; and we all have our choice to be vessels of honor or vessels of dishonor. God never works without giving the devil a fair chance to play *his* hand also, that man may have a free choice, and become a free-will angel or devil. As the magicians were empowered to withstand Moses, so when Christians praise, the devil reigns nowadays; but if we will resist the devil, he will flee from us. Trust in Jesus, for only in his strength are we safe.

If any thing has been said in this little book too severe of any person, or class of persons, I call God to witness that I have no object in view except to do his will and to follow Jesus; for I have given all for Christ, and my only object is to meet him in glory. I take the liberty to refer for the close of my preface to Acts iv. 13, for there you will see the only claim of the poor, blind, weak, unworthy author.

THE

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION;

OR, THE

PLAIN AND EASY ROAD TO HEAVEN.

Part I. — "BELIEVE."

"*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*"
Acts xvi. 31.

THE prophet Isaiah says, chapter xxxv. 8–10, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." And Solomon says, "The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge;" "Happy is the

man that findeth wisdom;" "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And we read, in Ezekiel xviii. 31, 32, "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." And our blessed Lord and Savior says, in Matthew xi. 28–30, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Our Lord also says, in Matthew xix. 29, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." And we have the same in Mark; and we read in Luke xviii. 29, 30, "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

In 1 John v. we read that God's commandments are not grievous, and every converted person will testify that it is easy to become a Christian; and if it costs anything to be a child of God, it costs infinitely more not to be one. The farmer will get at

least as good crops; the mechanic will get at least as good wages; the clerk will find at least as steady employment, and as good a salary; and the merchant will find as many and as reliable customers. But life is short — a dream, a bubble; and eternity never ends; and this is what should attract our attention. "Rejoice not," says our Savior, in Luke x., to the seventy, "that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

We find in Hebrews ii. 9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." And in 2 Peter iii. 9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Also in last chapter of Mark, that our Lord, after his resurrection, sent his disciples into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature; and we read in Scripture that God is no respecter of persons, for "All souls are mine, saith the Lord;" and the question at once arises, What shall we do to be saved? All evangelical Christians will unite in saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" for that is what Paul and Silas said to the keeper of the prison, and the whole teaching of the Bible is the same. See Matthew ix.: "Jesus said unto the blind men, Believe ye that I am able to do this?" and all they had to do was to *believe*, and

the Lord touched their eyes, and they were opened. We read in John iv. that Jesus told the woman of Samaria that he was the Messias; and he addressed her in a conversational way thus: "Woman, believe me." And what he said to her he says to all: "Believe me." If we ask he will give us the water of life, of which we may drink and never thirst. Turn to John vii. 37–39 and we find, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" And in Mark xvi. 15, 16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Look at 1 John v. 1–3: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." And this explains what our Lord said to Nicodemus, in John iii. 1–9: "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know

that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?"

Language cannot convey a clearer knowledge of the new birth than this. Whenever a person experiences a change of heart, it is simply believing on the Lord Jesus Christ; and whoever believes on him accepts the Bible as the Word of God, and it will read different from anything the natural or unconverted heart can understand or imagine. The Bible will seem plain and all parts will harmonize where once were apparent contradictions. The believer understands at once how "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The believer reads the Bible with pleasure, and delights in everything said of the Savior, and feasts upon every word our

Lord spoke himself. Compared to other parts of Scripture, his words are as diamonds set in gold. When the writer first believed that Jesus Christ is the very God, as he assures us he is, from that moment a hatred and horror of all sin, a love for God and all his creatures, and a distaste for the world and all selfish interests, followed, and the Bible was all new. Before it was read as a duty, but now as a pleasure. The first day was spent in weeping, prayer, reading the Scriptures, and testifying to a dying world the great goodness and love of God, and the joy of being counted a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and feeling his acceptance with him; and he has never ceased to wonder how he could have read the Bible through and through, by course and otherwise, and still call himself a Unitarian. No wonder Unitarian leaders and preachers deny the plenary inspiration of the Bible, for this and the Deity of Christ must stand or fall together.

How plainly the Gospel according to St. John commences: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." And then read verse 14: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Then turn to chapter xiv. 8–15: "Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not

known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Our Lord says, in John v. 39, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." O, how true this is! Only look at Isaiah ix. 6, 7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." There is no power above Jesus, for he is one with the Father; and all parts of the Word of God point to Jesus and his divinity just as plainly as all

the roads about any great city lead to the city itself. Take any one of these roads, and turn your back upon the city, and the farther you go the more distant the city; and so is it with Scripture. Ask God in prayer, in honest, fervent, secret prayer, to guide you, and every chapter and verse will lead you to Christ; but turn your back upon God, and go to work in your own strength, and to your sorrow, but perhaps too late, you will find how true are the apostle's words, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Reader, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Only look at John vi. 47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life;" and then at John xi. 25, 26, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

Glory to God! I believe this; and I hope I can say, from the bottom of my heart, with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Our Lord also says, in John viii. 51, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." Scripture tells us, "The wages of sin is death;" also, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die:" and the poet says, —

"It is not all of life to live,
Nor all of death to die."

There is a second death; and Scripture tells us, "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Adam

and Eve died the second death first. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," said the Great Creator. Many dead men may be found in the world breathing, occupying a body, but dead as Adam. I had been dead, many years dead, but by the grace of God I heard the Lord knocking at the door of my heart; I opened the door, I believed, I was raised. Glory to God! I have had part in the first resurrection, and over such the second death hath no power, providing they endure to the end. (See Revelation xx. 6.) Paul speaks of two kinds of bodies — terrestrial bodies and celestial bodies, of natural bodies and spiritual bodies; and our Lord says, in Matthew x. 28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." And then in verse 39, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Any one can see that two kinds of life and death are spoken of here.

"*God is love*," and has done everything to save man that he can do and leave man an individual; and if we do not believe, must we not of necessity have our portion appointed with the unbelievers? (See Luke xii. 46.) If we believe, John tells us, we are born of God, and if we are born of God we shall love God, and if we love him we shall keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. This is all very plain. Jesus says, "*Before Abraham was I am.*" He tells us he has power on earth to forgive sins; and after his

resurrection, that all power is given him in heaven and in earth (see 18th verse of last chapter of Matthew); and if we believe this, we are prepared to worship him, to serve him, and to obey him, and to say, with Thomas, "My Lord and my God." Accept the fact that Jesus Christ is God. Simply believe, and you are on the heavenly road; and keep stepping right after Jesus, and don't bother about doctrines, but follow the Lord, and you will surely reach heaven. (See John xxi. 22.) Peter asked the Lord a question which did not concern him, and Jesus answered, "What is that to thee? follow thou me."

Look at Genesis ii. 16, 17: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It is thought by many eminent Christians that this tree was the doctrine of foreknowledge and foreordination, or election, and wherever it is preached a dead church and lukewarm Christians are the result. This doctrine is in the mouth of all wicked persons, and continually repeated by them. It is evidently used by the devil to keep sinners unreconciled to Jesus, and to prevent the natural man from submitting to God. We have no right to question our Creator as we would a schoolboy, or a witness in a lawsuit. By so doing we prove ourselves enemies of God, and vainly attempt to put ourselves on an equality with him; and this

explains Genesis iii. 22, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us." It is enough for us to know there is no power above God. We have in the Bible all we need to know, and if we needed more, God would have given us more Scripture; but if we follow Jesus, and are born of God, and experience a change of heart, we shall receive evidence upon evidence, till our souls are perfectly satisfied; only *believe*, and all these other things will surely follow. The great hinderance to the conversion of myself was, I thought I could not understand the Trinity. I read in a printed sermon of an eminent Congregational Trinitarian clergyman of Boston, the Rev. Nehemiah Adams, as follows: "The doctrine of the Trinity is, by itself, of no practical value, any more than it is to know whether there be six or seven stars in the Pleiades;" and he alluded, in the same sermon, to Daniel Webster's reply to a Unitarian: "Neither you nor I understand the arithmetic of heaven." I also read, in a little book called "Light in Darkness," by a clergyman of the same denomination, as follows: "The old phrase, 'There are three persons in the Godhead,' stands between many Unitarians and the light." And he goes on to say that manifestations, instead of persons, approaches nearer the true meaning of the word, and says Christians of undoubted soundness in the faith — such men as Jacob Abbott — actually use that expression; and I found, by conversing with Christians of all the evangelical churches, there are many of all the denominations who accept Swedenborg's views of the Trinity: that

God the Father is the soul, that God the Son is the body, and that God the Holy Ghost is the spirit or influence of the same One Triune God; and that, as Scripture says, man is made in God's own image, so it is with man: every man is a trinity of spirit, soul, and body. See 1 Thessalonians v. 23; Hebrews iv. 12; Genesis i. 26, 27; 1 John v. 7. More will be said on this subject in the History of Christianity, which I will publish at some future time. But whoever will read the first chapter of John, and what our Lord says to Philip in the fourteenth chapter of John, and read the seventh verse of the fifth chapter of John's first epistle, and then turn back to the sixth and seventh verses of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, will be perfectly satisfied, with Paul, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow; for he has a name above every name. Reader, do you believe? Then go at once and seek admission into any evangelical church you choose. Confess to the world that you have faith in Jesus; for he has said, if we deny him before men, he will deny us before angels. Think of the shortness of life, think of the changes of the past year, or the past few years, and you will admit life is comparatively a moment, a bubble, a tale that is told, and we soon fly away.

After I experienced the new birth, I waited nearly two years before joining any church; and when I was asked why I did not unite with some church, I replied that I wanted to join all the churches, for I loved all God's children, and wanted simply to be

known as a humble follower of Jesus. But I finally united with the Methodist church, and only regret that I neglected that duty so long; for it is a powerful help to a weak Christian to belong to any church of true Christian worshippers. But before uniting with the church I read the creeds of all Christian churches. I read Swedenborg extensively, and would recommend his works on "Heaven and Hell," and "The Apocalypse Revealed," to every follower of Jesus; and others of his works may be read with profit. But the Bible is the fountain of all revealed knowledge, the true Word of God; and the Bible is my creed; yet the Methodist church is my home. Jesus says, in John x. 16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." There is but one church in heaven; but in this world there are many churches, and I thank God that there is a home for all — that there are many folds, and the Good Shepherd has a fold for every sheep. But woe to the sheep that has no fold, as the wolf seizes such; so the devil will be apt to lay claim to that Christian who joins no church, and does nothing to help support the gospel.

But remember, Jesus tells us to pray without ceasing. Read some portion of the Bible every day; but don't offer sacrifice to Paul, for he and Barnabas both forbade that. Paul says, in 1 Corinthians vii. 6, "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." And in xv. 9, "For I am the least of

the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Moses was not permitted to enter the land of promise, because, David says, in Psalm cvi., "*He spake unadvisedly with his lips.*" Moses took honor to himself and to Aaron. See Numbers xx. 9–12: "And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." We read, in Matthew xvi., that when Peter spoke from the Lord, Jesus blessed him; but when he spoke from himself, the Lord said, "*Get thee behind me, Satan.*"

There is none good but one, and that is God; and to the Triune God be all the glory and honor, forever and ever. See Revelation xv. 3, 4; xix. 10; and xxii. 8–11: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the

sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." What a rebuke we have here to Roman Catholics, and to modern spiritualists, and to all searchers after strange doctrines, apocryphal books, rapping mediums, and devil-worshippers generally! Don't worship men or angels, saints or devils; for whoever is willing to accept worship, save God alone, to whom belongs all honor, and glory, and worship, is a thief and a robber, and a devil. Whoever loses his humility cannot be a servant of God; and whoever does or says anything good, or receives anything good from any source, and does not acknowledge God as the author and giver, becomes a satan or a devil.

Worship God in prayer and praise. Our God is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. Prayer moves the arm that moves the universe. See James v. 17, 18: "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." Jesus tells us how to pray, in Matthew vi. 5–15: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners

of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And our Lord gives us two forms of prayer in Luke xviii. 10–14: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful

to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." When praying to God, do not repeat words coined to be heard of men. That is as anti-Christian as praying out of a book; and Henry Ward Beecher says he would as quick go courting with his father's old love letters, as to pray to the Lord Jesus Christ out of a prayer-book. At the Christian Convention, recently held in Boston, *praise meetings* were recommended instead of prayer meetings. (See "Zion's Herald" of Jan. 2, 1867.) A few words of honest, zealous praise to God, is better than long, stereotyped prayers without spirit; but a long prayer *may* also be a spiritual one. Read Solomon's prayer in 2 Chron. vi.: "The king knelt and prayed, and God answered the prayer." See also chapter vii. Let us be humble, and God will take care of us and bless us.

O, the love of God! What unspeakable love Jesus bears towards all his followers, and towards even the vilest sinners! For he loved us before we loved him. See Matthew xii. 49, 50: "And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethen! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. Yes, glory to Jesus! Christianity is a leveller; God is no respecter of persons. In Luke i. 46, 47, 52, 53, see the words of the blessed virgin herself among other things: "And Mary said, My soul

doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." If God has work to be done he must of course choose instruments; but that does not make him a respecter of persons. All true servants of the Lord Jesus Christ have the same interest in him, and the same claim upon his promises, as any of the prophets or apostles. None but the Triune God himself is worthy of worship, or divine honor and glory; and none other can aid us when we stand before Christ's judgment seat. See Jeremiah xv. 1: "Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth." Also see Exodus xxxii. 32, 33, and Ezekiel xiv. 14: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God."

Did the Lord not call Peter Satan? and did he not rebuke the seventy for rejoicing because the devils were subject unto them? "Rejoice rather," said our Lord, "that your names are written in heaven." We can afford to love our enemies and suffer persecution for Christ's sake, if we may have eternal bliss in heaven for our reward. The soul that sinneth, it shall die; but if you love Jesus you shall never see death.

Praying to God without ceasing that these few

passages of Scripture laid before you may assist to lead you to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, I will close by saying the second part, which follows, will point out the Christian's duty; for unless we abide in the ship we cannot be saved; unless we endure to the end we have no promise of life, but rather the assurance that God will spew us out of his mouth, and that our names shall be blotted out of the Lamb's book of life. Trusting you now believe, all you have to do is to receive. The feast is ready, and you are invited. Put on the wedding garment, so that you will not be found speechless when you stand before Christ's judgment seat; and when you see the angel of death approaching, you can say with Paul, 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

THE

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION;

OR, THE

PLAIN AND EASY ROAD TO HEAVEN.

Part II. — "RECEIVE."

"*And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" — John xx. 22.

This was after our Lord's crucifixion and resurrection. This is the new birth, spoken of by our Lord to Nicodemus. "This is the first resurrection;" and we read, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ." This is Christ's baptism. This is what John speaks of in Matthew: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

This is what the prophets foretold (see Matthew

iii. 3, and Acts ii. 16, 17) ; and whoever experiences this blessed change can see all parts of Scripture pointing to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, just as plain as all the roads about a large city lead to the city itself. The believer knows there is a reality in religion. He knows Christ's words are true. He knows Christ's promises can never fail. He knows where two or three are met together in the name of Jesus, that he will be amongst them, and he will breathe on them, and they will receive the Holy Ghost. The true Christian knows all this. First, believe, and then, receive, and our joys are immortal. We shall never see death ; we shall live right on through the grave ; for Jesus has promised this. He said to the thief on the cross, " This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Glory to Jesus ! Praise the Lord ! Bless his holy name ! Death has no sting, and the grave has no victory, for the Christian.

" Jesus hath broken the bars of the tomb ;
Joyfully, joyfully, will we go home."

Dear reader, you believe in the promises of Jesus ; you believe all he said is true ; you believe religion pays in this world and in the world to come. It is good to live by and good to die by, and it secures us an entrance into heaven. You are born again ; you believe the Bible ; our Lord tells us, if we follow him we shall have a hundred fold reward in this present life, and in the world to come life everlasting. You believe the Lord's yoke is easy and his burden is light. You believe heaven is a place of rest, prepared for the people of God, and that it is a

delightful place, a place of great happiness; for that is all true Bible doctrine. Paul says, in 1 Corinthians, ii. 9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Here he refers to and indorses the words of God by the prophet Isaiah, lxiv. 4: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

You love to read the Bible, of course, and read some part of the Word of God daily, and you pray daily in your closet that God will help you to understand his word. Pray without ceasing. As God is our Creator, and we his creatures, of course we belong to him, and ought to obey him as a duty; for of right his own creatures belong to him, — it would be too weak a comparison to say he has the same right to us that we have to any property of our own earning, — and of course you are willing to obey God; you are willing to keep his commandments. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Well, what are his commandments? Why, in one sense, all the Bible; for Jesus is the Author and Finisher of the whole world; without him was not anything made that was made. He is the Word that was with God and was God, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. But the essence of the whole will of God, the sum and substance of all God's commandments, were written by the finger of

Jehovah God, himself, upon two tables of stone, and given us by the hand of Moses; and we have them all in Exodus xx., as follows: —

"1. And God spake all these words, saying: —

"2. I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"4. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

"5. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

"6. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

"7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

"8. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

"9. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;

"10. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

"11. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested

the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

"12. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

"13. Thou shalt not kill.

"14. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

"15. Thou shalt not steal.

"16. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

"17. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's."

These ten commandments are what is referred to by our Savior so often. In the language of heaven ten means the whole. There are but ten characters in figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0; all other figures and numbers are made up from these ten characters. The commandments are here copied and versed exactly as in the Bible, but not numbered; and all Christians, even Roman Catholics, agree that here are the whole ten commandments. These cannot be mistaken for the law of Moses, given for the hardness of the hearts of the Hebrews, for these were written by God's own finger, on two tables of stone; and these two tables, if followed, believing in Jesus, will surely lead us to heaven. On the first table we have our whole duty to God, and on the second table our whole duty to our fellow-man; and when our blessed Lord was in the flesh, and dwelling

on this earth, he was asked which was the greatest of the commandments; and he did what none but God could have done — he gave the essence of the whole ten in two. Here are his words, Matthew xxii. 37–40: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Here we have the whole duty of man. Here are both tables of stone — the first, love to God; the second, love to man. The words of Jesus are always new; and he says of the essence of the whole second table, in John xiii. 34–38, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." Poor, weak Peter! Poor, weak mortal! No wonder David said to the Lord, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and Paul refers to David's

words, indorsing them of course. Our Lord said, "There is none good but one, that is God;" and without God's help, without a living, active faith in Jesus, and a humble reliance upon our blessed Lord, and a perfect dependence upon him, we are *dead*. We cannot keep his commandments in our own strength; but if we go to Jesus, he says, whoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out. Jesus says, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." We all have the same blessed privilege which John enjoyed, to lean on Jesus's breast; and that is a foundation to lean upon that death and hell can never remove. While we lean on Jesus, we are safe; but do not lean on yourself, like Peter. Do not lean on any man, or saint, or angel, but God alone; for he is the only foundation. Jesus is the vine, and we are the branches; and we have no life of ourselves, but it all comes from the vine; and if we abide not in him, we are dead. If we remain not servants of Jesus, and if we give not to him all the glory, we are dead. For *our* good, Jesus warns us, in Luke xvii. 10, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

We must believe in Jesus, remain subject to Jesus, and keep his commandments, or we are none of his. In that great day when the division is made, we shall receive the sentence, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." We shall go to the left, and not to the right; we shall go with the goats, and not with

the sheep; we shall be counted tares, and not wheat — unless we believe on him, remain subject to him, and keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. See John xv. 10–14: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." And then look at John xiv. 1–7: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father; for Isaiah calls Jesus "the Wonderful," "the Counsellor," "the Mighty God," "the Everlasting Father," "the Prince of Peace," hundreds of years

before he took upon himself a human form to conquer death and hell, and save man; and then in the same chapter follows Philip's desire to see the Father; and Jesus says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," &c. But I have not space to repeat all the Bible. Read for yourself, and God will lead you, if you ask him alone in your closet, in spirit and in truth. But God is not mocked. Be honest with God, and heaven will be your home. Fellow-Christian, in the name of God, let us examine our conduct each day by the ten commands, or ten words, or two tables, or the Decalogue; for if we do not keep those ten commands, hell is our portion. Jehovah God wrote them with his own finger, and over the pearly gates of heaven are written the ten commandments; and no one who breaks those commandments can ever enter without repentance and forgiveness; and all scholars tell us that the word *repent* means *change*, and if we ever break any one of these commandments, we must change and cease to break them; and Jesus Christ has power on earth to forgive sins, and will forgive us if we repent, and, believing on him, ask forgiveness. Let us grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, and Jesus will breathe on us, and we shall be baptized continually with his spirit; and we shall so grow into the love of God that it will be impossible for us to break any one of his commandments. To obey God must at first be done as a duty, and we must begin with the fear of God; for the wise man

says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but as we walk on towards the city of our God, duty soon becomes pleasure, and fear becomes love. The cross is only to start with; but it soon becomes a crown. John tells us, perfect love casteth out fear; and if we follow Jesus we shall soon realize the truth of his promise that we shall receive one hundred-fold reward in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. But remember Lot's wife! remember how many times the Scriptures speak of blotting names out of the book of life! and they could not be blotted out if they were never in there. Read Ezekiel xviii. and xxxiii., and remember that unless you endure to the end, you had better never have started! Do not turn back like a dog to his vomit again, or like swine to their wallowing in the mire.

Jesus says, in Matthew xi. 21, 22, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." O ye thieves, liars, adulterers, and profane swearers, who profess to be Christians, and seek admission into churches without repentance! O ye hypocrites! your places in hell will be far down below the heathen, — there are degrees in hell as well as in heaven, — and Jesus says truly that the harlots shall enter heaven sooner than you. If God had a spare seat in heaven, and must of neces-

sity go to hell for an occupant, he would take a harlot or a heathen quicker than a hypocrite. Whited sepulchres! blind guides! hypocrites! how can you escape the damnation of hell? Don't the Bible say, without holiness no man shall see the Lord? Lukewarm Christians, read the following message of Jesus, from Revelation iii. 12–16: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

Wake up, ye lukewarm Christian, and blow the trumpet as God commands in Ezekiel xxxiii. Don't be afraid to cry aloud and shout in meeting, "Glory to God! Amen!" Don't be ashamed of Jesus. Put on the wedding garment, or you will be speechless in the day of judgment. Look at Revelation vii. 9–12: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with

white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."

Remember you read in Job xxxviii., that when the world was made all the sons of God shouted for joy. When Christ made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem they praised God with a loud voice. See Luke xix. 37–40: "And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

Did not shouting bring down the walls of Jericho? I tell you, when Christians shout, hell trembles. Good old-fashioned Methodist shouting does our souls good, and helps to lead us away from temptation, and out of evil; but we must remember to keep God's commandments, for only thus can we praise him in spirit and in truth. Let us not neg-

lect the spirit while we attend to the letter. Jesus says, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone."

See the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew vii. 21–28: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine."

Jesus is the Rock of Ages on which we all must build, for there is no other name under heaven whereby men can be saved. In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Jesus says, Before

Abraham was, I am. Don't we read in John i. that the Word which was made flesh, and dwelt among us, created all things, and without him was not anything made that was made?

Jesus led Israel out of bondage. See what he said to Moses: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD: and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them."

In Isaiah ix. 6 we read the different names of our Lord: the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And all these names and titles, and everything that is good, everything that ever was good, and everything that ever will be good, is all concentrated into one word — JESUS. Bless his holy name! He has all power in heaven and in earth; and don't it pay to obey his commandments, and to follow him, and to try to be like him, and to worship him, and to say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God"?

John says, in his first epistle, ii. 3–6, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his com-

mandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

It is evident no man in his own strength can keep the ten commandments, or the decalogue. We must believe in Jesus, and be baptized of the Holy Ghost. Jesus must breathe on us, and open our spiritual understanding for us before we can see the beauty, the spirit, and the life of the ten commandments; but if we will ask him, he will surely do these things for us. But no Unitarian can receive the baptism of Jesus. I vainly attempted to seek the new birth eighteen years ago. I was a Unitarian. But God had prospered me beyond my expectations in material things, and I, a poor vile worm of the dust, thought I could pay him by accepting eternal salvation. So I went to Congregational meetings, and to Methodist meetings, and arose for prayers, and told them I wanted to be a Christian; but I still clung to the Unitarian delusion that Jesus Christ was not equal with God, and that the Bible was not a book of plenary inspiration. I suffered terribly. God in Heaven only knows my agony. I was convicted of sin, but could not see my total depravity. I had miraculous warnings; the stones almost cried out to me to follow the Lord Jesus. I went about mourning, but I received no evidence. For months I desired death; and I even attempted to take my own life; but God spared

me, even as he spared Jonah. I was redeemed like a brand plucked from the burning, or a piece of an ear from a lion's mouth. Why did I suffer all this? I can see now. I did not take the first step towards regeneration. I did not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That Unitarian demon still held me in its hellish grasp. I still thought Jesus was only a good man; I did not believe he was God; and I groped in worse than Egyptian darkness. I turned my back upon the Light of the world. I sought to enter in at some other door; and I did not see myself a thief and a robber, in common with other Unitarians: and while in this condition I met Laroy Sunderland, an apostate Methodist minister, and he told me a change of heart was a humbug, and that there was no reality in experimental religion; then I met J. S. Loveland, another apostate Methodist minister, who confirmed what Sunderland had told me. And the Unitarian demon took with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and I became not only a disbeliever in the Lord and the Bible, but a "modern spiritualist;" and I accepted the "all right" doctrine. I became a fatalist, and my favorite authors were Thomas Paine and Theodore Parker — those twin T. P.'s of the devil. But Voltaire was my man of sound doctrine; for I believed whoever accepted Theodore Parker, and his elder brother Thomas Paine, would accept their superior, Voltaire. I considered Parker only a stepping-stone to fatality and the "all right" doctrine, so I attended his church, bought all his books, and thought him a prophet; and a prophet he

was, but a prophet of lies, a blasphemer, and a false prophet, who, like Judas, has gone to his own place. Jesus says, in John iii. 12, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Let us examine Theodore Parker as a prophet. In his discourse, which he claimed was occasioned by the death of Daniel Webster, delivered October 31, 1852, how the foolish ass kicked the dead lion! On page 223, in his "Additional Speeches," he says, after quoting Webster, "Do you think he believed that? Daniel Webster knew better." And on page 228, Parker says, "There was not any danger of a storm; not a single capful of bad weather between Cape Sable and the Lake of the Woods." Daniel Webster had said a civil war was brewing, and that the Union was in danger; but Theodore Parker insulted the dead statesman by accusing him of bidding for the presidency, and telling what he knew to be false. A few short years have proved Webster the true prophet, and Parker the prophet of lies. In Weiss' Life of Theodore Parker, page 77, vol. i., a letter is printed styling T. Parker a little more refined than T. Paine, but advocating the same doctrine. Page 287 says he was very fond of bears, and calls his wife "the great original bear." Now Emanuel Swedenborg tells us, in No. 573 of the "Apocalypse Revealed," that bear, in the Bible, has reference to those who read the Word of God and do not understand it — that it is a correspondence of fallacies. On page 250 of vol. ii., samples of prayers at Park Street

Church are given, where Christians prayed for the death of Parker. Well, the prayers were answered, and where is T. Parker now? The modern spiritualists say he spends much of his time in the company of T. Paine, and other kindred anti-Christ spirits, at the "Banner of Light Office;" and if there is any truth in the so-called "new philosophy" this may be true, for the "Banner of Light" abounds in "Parker philosophy." I have heard Theodore Parker say, in Music Hall, that he could not help fearing the devil, though he knew there was no such a being. And since my conversion I often shudder at the blasphemies I have heard that man utter against our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and it is just so with the "Banner of Light." I have before me a copy of that paper, dated November 4, 1865, in which the spirits purport to say Jesus Christ and the devil are one and the same individual. The spirit answer reads, "We believe the two are one;" and after stating that the devil spoke through Jesus, they say, "We affirm again, we have seen both." — "We know something of this devil, something of this Christ." This is the spirit of Parkerism distilled, and given for truth by the spirits of the damned through the "Banner of Light." See 1 John iv. 1–3: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not

of God." W. M'Donald's Spiritualism, published by the Methodist Society, contains many good warnings, but the Bible contains the best warnings of all. See 1 Timothy iv. 1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." And whoever disputes the Deity of Jesus, or the plenary inspiration of the Bible, is an agent of hell, whether he be called T. Parker, an angel from heaven, or the devil himself. See Galatians i. 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The words of Acts xiii. 8–10 apply equally to Unitarian mortals and Unitarian spirits and their mediums, the sorcerers of the present day: "But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" These passages of Scripture at the close of brother M'Donald's book are perfectly applicable: "Let not thine heart incline to their ways; go not astray in their paths. Their house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. The dead are there, and their guests are in the depths of hell." These doctrines kept me in the valley of the shadow of death for sixteen years, but while hunger-

ing and thirsting after righteousness, on Sunday morning, April 23, 1865, about sunrise, I was standing alone on Boston Common, and the Lord Jesus Christ breathed on me; and I have never since doubted the Deity of my Redeemer. If a whirlwind had taken me a mile into the air and landed me back safely on the same spot, it would have been no better *evidence to me*. I know I am born of God, and have been growing in grace from that moment. I hated my sins from that moment, and my conversion consisted in believing in the Deity of Christ and the surety of all his promises; and since then I have loved what I before hated, and I have hated what I before loved; for I had rolled sin like a sweet morsel under my tongue; I had loved myself and the world supremely, but now I love God supremely, and my neighbor as myself. Perhaps there are no two conversions exactly alike. Doubtless many persons, who are not as selfish and wicked as I was, may be converted without knowing the exact time of the new birth, — they may have first the blade, then the ear, and then the full ripe corn, — but desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and where sin abounds there grace much more abounds. Old, hardened sinners, such as I was, must have sudden changes. We who have passed from death unto life must love the brethren, and love our enemies, and love and pity the Lord's enemies, for he said, on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" but it is wrong to discuss the nature of the Trinity with Unitarians; it is casting pearls before swine, and

Scripture forbids that; and Paul says, in Titus iii. 10, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonitions, reject." Daniel Webster's reply is the best that can be made (see page 17), but I have heard scoffers confused by saying, "Any Christian man who supports aged parents is a dutiful son, and if he has a wife he is an affectionate husband, and if he has a family of children he is a kind father; but still he is only one man." There is a trinity that any person can understand, — son, husband, and father, all in one! Glory to Jesus! Whoever believes in his Deity, and in the plenary inspiration of the Bible, and keeps the commandments, is sure of heaven. Any true Christian would rather be an instrument in the hands of God for converting one sinner than to own the whole world, for his trust is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he rejoices that his name is written in heaven; but it is vain to trust in Jesus without believing in him. If he was not God, he was not good. If he was not Deity, he was the direct opposite to everything good. Jesus says this himself in Matthew xix. 16–22: "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy

neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

Here you see how deceitful the human heart is, and desperately wicked. That young man broke the first of the ten commandments. He had another god besides his Creator. He had an idol. He loved his possessions better than he loved God. Here you see Jesus referred to the second table first, that is to say, to our duty to our brother man; and the young man thought he kept all the commandments; but when our Lord referred to the first table, or our duty to God, the young man went away sorrowful. The fact is, he broke all the commandments in spirit, and none but a truly converted follower of Jesus can keep any command of God as it should be kept, in spirit and in truth. Remember how great a Savior we have! by whom the worlds were made; and his promises can never fail. Remember the Scriptures tell us that faith without works is dead, and that devils believe and tremble. Jesus came not to destroy the law or the prophets. He came to offer salvation to every creature. GOD IS LOVE, saith Scripture. *Jesus wept*, saith Scripture. He wept over Jerusalem, at his triumphant entry. We read, "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over

it." O, the blessed Jesus is grieved at our sins! He died to save us. Reader, do you love Jesus? Then fear to grieve him. If you loved a child, or a parent, or a companion, you would not wish to grieve them. Keep the commandments. Examine your conduct each day by the decalogue. It is comforting to breathe a secret prayer daily somewhat like the following: —

O, our blessed Creator and Savior! Help us to keep thy commandments, and to have no other gods but thee, and to have no regard for idols. Help us to use no profane or idle words. Help us to keep thy Sabbaths as shall be pleasing in thy sight. Help us to respect our parents and superiors, and the aged and wise, while we live. Help us to never murder. Help us to never commit adultery. Help us to never steal. Help us to never lie or deceive. Help us to never covet the property of others. Help us to love thee with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and our neighbors as ourselves. And thine shall be the praise forever and ever. Amen.

Be pure, be holy. Read Revelation xxii. 14, 15: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Remember James says, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

The Bible nowhere promises a reward for keeping

the commandments. But, "In keeping them there is great reward." (Psalms xix. 11.) "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke xvii. 21.) Jesus says, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone," &c. (Matthew xv. 13, 14.) "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers." (Psalms xxxvii. 1.) "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Romans xii. 20.) "Overcome evil with good." (xii. 21.)

True Christians will never punish wicked persons unless they can feel God requires it. We must love our enemies, and if we feel it a duty to punish them, do it in the fear of God, for their own good. We must do by wicked men just as we would be done by if we ourselves were as wicked, and remember God loved us before we loved him. If a person steals our goods, we must correct him in such a way, if possible, as will reform him; but we must do it for God's sake, and our neighbor's sake, and not for our own private revenge. But, says the sinner, "God is love." (1 John iv. 8, 16.) Yes, we reply. Again, says the sinner, "The Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." (Lamentations iii. 33.) "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.) Jesus Christ is the sinner's friend, — "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." (Hebrews xiii. 8.) And, continues the sinner, he is unchangeable, for James tells us (i. 17), with him is "no variable-

ness or shadow of turning;" consequently, after death, he will make us all happy.

O, poor deluded sinner! Life is the time to serve the Lord, for over the gates of heaven are written the ten commandments, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still; and you will call for the rocks and mountains to fall upon you and hide you from the presence of the Lamb of God, who was slain for the sins of the world. You will be unable to stand God's presence, and the light of his lovely countenance will be to you worse than the light of the sun of the natural world to the owls and bats, which love darkness rather than light. Then you will thank God you have a hell to flee to, for you will not be clothed with a garment of righteousness. Jesus has prepared one for you, but you refused to put it on, and you will be speechless. God will make you in hell as comfortable as he can, consistent with the safety and comfort of his other children; but a division must be made, and you must be counted tares, and not wheat. You must go to the left with the goats, and not with the sheep. You must spend eternity with the condemned. You have had your choice, and have chosen for your father the devil, for his works you have done all your life — and your works must follow you; that is, in accordance with God's laws, which never change. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (Matthew xvi. 27.) "And shall come forth; they that have done

good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John v. 29.) "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians v. 10.) "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." (Revelation xx. 12.) Numerous other similar passages we omit for want of space.

Read the first chapter of Isaiah and the seventh chapter of Jeremiah, and see that professions will not save us unless we bring forth fruits meet for repentance. God justifies not the hearer, but the doer, of the law. (Romans ii. 13.) To obey is better than sacrifice. (Samuel xv. 22.) We all have a duty to perform; we must obey God's commandments. Sins of omission may send us to hell as well as sins of commission. See Matthew xxv.: When Jesus shall separate the nations like sheep and goats, the goats go to the left, not for doing wrong, but for neglecting to do right. I once heard an eminent Methodist preacher say in a sermon, "Jesus is our Savior. He saves us from our sins, and if we do not forsake them, and hate them, and commit them no more, we are not truly converted, for if we do not leave our sins we are not saved from them."

I will close with Ecclesiastes xii. 12–14: "And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion

of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Dear reader, may we meet in heaven. And to the Triune God be all the praise, and honor, and glory, forever and ever. AMEN.

NOTES.

Note A.

(See page 16.)

Much has been written and said upon the subject of election, or foreordination; but I never yet found a person who claimed that this doctrine ever caused a conversion or led to one. Why, then, is it preached? Some answer, "Because it is in the Bible." But the most learned and pious men that ever lived, say there is no such doctrine in the Bible, from Genesis to Rev lation; and they refer you, for a clear refutation of this troublesome dogma, to the 18th and 33d chapters of Ezekiel, and such texts as the following: —

"And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." (Genesis vi. 6, 7.)

"The Lord is good to all." (Psalms cxlv. 9.)

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it. "If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it. "If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jeremiah xviii. 7–10.)

"They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind." (Jeremiah xix. 5.)

"For the Lord will not cast off forever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." (Lamentations iii. 31–33.)

"For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Matthew ix. 13.)

"God is no respecter of persons." (Acts ix. 34.)

"The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter iii. 9.)

"God is love." (1 John iv. 8–16.)

One Christian minister, who is a successful evangelist, told me he found this doctrine of election a greater hindrance to the conversion of sinners than both Universalism and infidelity together. Very few Christians doubt but what God foreknew everything from the foundation of the world; but the difference between foreknowledge and predestination is clearly shown by Emanuel Swedenborg in his "Heavenly Arcana," numbers 6488 and 6489. He says, while in one of his trances and he was in the spirit world, talking with the souls of the departed, "there was discourse concerning predestination, and many of the spirits, from principles imbibed in the world, were in the opinion that some are predestinated to heaven, and some to hell; but I heard a reply from heaven, that in no case is any one predestinated to hell, but that all are predestinated to life eternal. * * * For evils are foreseen, and goods are provided; and the evils which are foreseen, by the provident arrangement of the Lord, are continually bended towards good, for the divine end to good universally reigns: hence neither is anything permitted except for the end, that thence some good may come forth; but whereas man has freedom, in order that he may be reformed, he is bended from evil to good so far as he suffers himself to be bended in freedom, and continually from the most grievous hell, into which he labors by every endeavor to plunge himself, into a milder, if he cannot be led to heaven." We are taught by Swedenborg that man is created by God a reasonable, accountable being, and given freedom; which freedom God preserves to all eternity, and provides hell for the wicked with just as perfect love as He provides darkness for owls and bats and filthy food for ravens and ravenous beasts. Few Christians can be found in any church at the present day who really believe in the old-fashioned Jewish doctrine of election. (See 16th chapter of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's "Norwood.") How pharisaic and selfish for any man to think God provided him a mansion before the foundation of the world, and left the great mass of just as good human beings unprovided for, or what is still worse, provided with eternal torture. What a blasphemous libel upon the God of Love—for "GOD IS LOVE." "Thy Maker is thy husband," says our Lord by the mouth of His prophet Isaiah. Said the angel to John, in Revelation xxi. 9: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the lamb's wife." Whoever is truly regenerated loves God with the whole heart and soul and mind, and his neighbor as himself, and is conjoined to Christ in heavenly marriage, as the branch to the vine; and no earthly being ever loved a partner with so pure, so ardent, and so constant a love, as the truly regenerated, sanctified Christian continually loves the Lord Jesus Christ, who is no respecter of persons, but who will make all souls as comfortable as their natures will admit, to all eternity. Some think they find this doctrine of a partial God in Paul's epistles, but they must remember that those epistles were written to those self-righteous, egotistic and very wicked nations, the Romans, Greeks and Hebrews, who believed themselves to be the elect nations, or the especial favorites of Heaven; but their subsequent history proves that God is no respecter of persons or of nations. Peter says (2 Peter iii. 15, 16) that these epistles are "hard to be understood"; "for Paul was so earnest to convert those nations, that he catered to their prejudices and became "all things to all men." But he says he sometimes spoke "not

after the Lord," and he sometimes apologized for his mistakes. Christian ministers ought to preach Jesus instead of Paul, for Jesus never made a mistake. (See Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion.")

Note B.

(See page 19.)

I am often asked why I joined the Methodist Church, as I am a reader and admirer of the writings of Swedenborg; and his views first led me to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." After my conversion, I felt a strong desire to partake of the Lord's Supper; and I became acquainted with a Methodist minister, who is truly a follower of John Wesley; and he baptized me, and received me into the Methodist church. He told me I had a right to my peculiar views, for no two persons agree in all their ideas. People differ, and have a right to differ. "But," said he, "if you believe man is by nature in a lost state, and needs a Saviour,—that the life, sufferings, death and resurrection of the Saviour were necessary for your salvation,—in other words, that Jesus bled and died for you, and you think you have already been breathed upon by Him,—that you have had a baptism of the Holy Spirit,—all you need to do is to conform to the customs of the church, receive the external baptism, unite with the church; and then grow in grace, and go up higher and higher, until you are sanctified or thoroughly regenerated, and get, even in this world, so thoroughly grafted into the Living Vine, that the devil will have no further power or control over you." Now let us look at the liberal views of John Wesley, and see how perfectly they agree with the above: We read in Stevens's "History of Methodism," Vol. I, page 245, the following, in Wesley's own language:

"The Methodists are in nowise bigoted to opinions. I will not quarrel with you about any opinion. Only see that your heart be right towards God, that you *know* and *love* the Lord Jesus Christ; that you love your neighbor, and walk as your Master walked, and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions, I am weary to hear them. My soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion; give me an humble, gentle lover of God and man, a man full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love. Let my soul be with these Christians wheresoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of. 'Whosoever [thus] doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'"

And in Vol. II, page 387: "One circumstance more is quite peculiar to the people called Methodists; that is, the terms upon which any person may be admitted into their society. They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold particular or general redemption, absolute or conditional decrees. They think, and let think. One condition, and one only, is required—a real desire to save their souls. Where this is, it is enough: they desire no more; they lay stress upon nothing else; they ask only, 'Is thy heart herein as my heart? if it be, give me thy hand.'"

On pages 388 and 389 of same volume, Mr. Stevens quotes what John Wesley said when he was eighty-six years old, and says: "His only restriction on opinions in his societies was, that they should not be obtruded for discussion or wrangling in their devotional meetings; not the creed of a man, but his moral conduct respecting it, was a question of discipline with primitive Methodism. The possible results of such liberality were once discussed in the Conference. Wesley conclusively determined the debate by remarking: 'I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from me, than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair; but if he takes his wig off, and begins to shake the powder about my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible.'"

John Wesley had errors, of course. He believed in the immortality of the souls of animals, and some other things not accepted by Methodists of the present day. He never saw Swedenborg during his life, and it is said that he believed the false report, circulated by wicked men, that the great author was insane; but that same class of people told just such falsehoods about the Lord of Glory himself, and accused the early Christians at the day of Pentecost of being drunken. That same class of people called Wesley himself an insane man, and they call the Methodists of to-day a crazy set; but that amounts to nothing. The most eminent Methodists now living, both among the clergy and laity, accept Swedenborg's explanation of the Scriptures; and I have the best of living proof that Francis Asbury, while our first bishop, said there was nothing in the writings of Swedenborg to conflict with the teachings of Methodism. The most successful preachers, in all the different denominations at the present day, get their new and startling ideas from Swedenborg. When Rev. Newman Hall, from London, said in Dr. Kirk's church, not long since, that God would give to every soul in the future world as good a place as that soul was fitted to occupy, he only quoted what Swedenborg wrote more than one hundred years ago.

The following, from Dr. Guthrie, went the rounds of the religious press of America, a year or two ago, and attracted no small share of wondrous admiration: "They say I am growing old, because my hair is silvered, and there are crow's-feet upon my forehead, and my step is not so firm and elastic as of yore. But they are mistaken. That is not me. The knees are weak, but the knees are not me. The eyes are dim, but the eyes are not me. The brow is wrinkled, but the brow is not me. This is the house in which I live. But I am young — younger now than I ever was before."

The following is from Swedenborg: "They who are in heaven are continually advancing towards the spring of life; and the more thousands of years they live, so much the more delightful and happy is the spring to which they attain, and this to eternity, with increase according to their progress in love, charity, and faith. Of the female sex, they who have died old and worn out with age, and yet have lived in faith in the Lord, in charity towards their neighbor, and in happy conjugal love with a husband, after a succession of years come more and more into the flower of youth, and into a beauty which exceeds every idea of beauty anywhere perceptible to the sight of the material eye. Goodness and charity is what forms and makes a resemblance of itself, causing the delight and beauty of charity to shine forth from every

part of the face, so that they themselves are forms of charity. The form of charity, which is seen to the life in heaven, is such, that charity itself is what is effigied, and this in such a manner, that the whole angel, especially the face, is as it were, charity, which manifestly appears and is perceived; which form, when it is viewed, is ineffable beauty, affecting with charity the very inmost life of the mind. In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young; they who have lived in love to the Lord and in charity towards the neighbor, become such forms of such beauties in the other life."

Swedenborg's mission was not to add anything to the Word of God, but to explain its internal meaning. He tells us that every chapter, verse, and word has thousands of internal meanings, that will be the study of angels to all eternity; and none but God alone will ever perfectly understand the whole of the Bible. Yet enough of it is so plain, "that the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

Swedenborg never established an external church. He lived and died a member of the Lutheran church. He tells us that whoever does as well as he knows how, does well enough; and that all innocent people, from all churches and all countries, go to heaven, while the vast amount of church-members, of all denominations, who live lives of hypocrisy, and do not keep God's Ten Commandments, go to the deepest hell—far below harlots and heathens. God, not man, is the Final Judge, and He will surely give to every soul as good a place as that soul is fitted to occupy.

Note C.

(See page 23.)

In quoting this remark of Mr. Beecher, I did not mean to assert that a liturgy for the Methodist, or the Episcopal, or any other church, was positively sinful, or even of necessity objectionable; but that while attending to the letter, we ought not to neglect the spirit.

Perhaps there may be neither merit nor demerit in repeating prayers; but our Heavenly Father wants our love. To love Him with our whole heart and soul and mind, and our neighbor as ourself, is the all of religion. God is love itself and goodness itself; and He has created us to love Him, and to be loved of Him. But if we reject His love and refuse to love Him (which He gives every human being freedom to do), even then, to all eternity, He will make us as comfortable as He can without destroying our freedom. All praise, and honor, and glory to the God of love! I have heard ministers pray, who would have improved greatly by confining themselves to a prayer-book. The following is a case in Mr. Beecher's own denomination, which Zion's Herald, of Dec. 19th, 1867, quotes from the "Congregationalist": "We could tell a good story of a clergyman, who, in spite of * * * * a jerk at his coat-tail from a brother behind him, prayed *fifty* minutes at the funeral of another minister, and the next day was surprised to find that he had occupied more than a quarter of that time. At a united Thanksgiving service, in this city, not many years since, a prayer of *forty* minutes preceded a sermon by another minister, that occupied but *thirty-five* minutes. Many

prayers at our Sabbath services are too long, as those who make them will readily see, if they will but note the time at the beginning and then at its close. One of the wisest and most venerable pastors in Massachusetts expresses the opinion that eight minutes is long enough for this service. The gift of brevity is one that clergymen cannot afford to despise." A liturgy would obviate all this difficulty, but, perhaps, it might be still better to repeat the Lord's Prayer only. All Christians should repeat daily the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. This may be done mentally, while engaged in labor, or in the closet, or at the family altar; and if it be truly a *heart* service, great will be the benefit sure to follow.

"God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "God is not mocked." Not lip service, but, in the language of Bishop Heber, "The heart's adoration" is what pleases "our Father who art in the Heavens."

Note D.

When Unitarians are spoken of in this work, reference is had to those who deny the deity of Christ; but the best Christians now living are Unitarians, in the following sense: They believe Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, that is to say, that He is the body or the temple of The One only and True God, united like the soul and body of a man. Also, the Universalists spoken of in this work, are those who believe all will be equally happy immediately after death; but those persons who believe in degrees of happiness in the future world, and that God will give to every soul as good a place as that soul is fitted to occupy, are among the "salt of the earth;" and John Wesley admitted such Unitarians and Universalists into the primitive Methodist churches.

Henry Ward Beecher says no person ought to be blamed for his honest religious belief. And if this great truth were recognized by all professors of religion, there would be less hypocrisy and more true christianity in the world. I have before me a very interesting account of the prosperity of a church in New England, which is composed of Baptists, Congregationalists, Swedenborgians, Methodists, Episcopalians, &c. God is no respecter of persons. No soul was ever forced into heaven by miracles or lost for want of proper evidence; but some have more warnings and evidences and more wonderful conversions than others; but with all these advantages goes the additional accountability to God. Pharaoh saw miracles, but his heart was hardened to balance. The Jews saw miracles in the days of our Savior, but they were addressed in parables to balance; and we of the present day have those same miracles recorded, and the same parables explained. I weep alone in my closet when I think of the warnings God has given me; and if I am not faithful unto death, I shall never wear a crown of life. If I do not keep God's commandments, I shall never enter heaven. That we may all finally reach that blest realm, where there shall be but one fold and one Shepherd, is the prayer of the writer of this little book.

The Congregational Church and Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

No church in America has done more for the advancement of human freedom, liberal education, and good morals, than the Congregational Church. It is said that Thomas Jefferson pronounced their church government more democratic than that of any other sect on earth. I have witnessed the admission of members into this church when the officiating clergyman read the creed, and said it was not expected that all would understand it alike, for there were no two faces or two minds exactly alike, and but two primitive questions were absolutely essential. 1st: *Do you accept the Bible?* and, 2nd: *Will you try to follow its teachings?* If the Puritans had faults, no sect of their time had less, and well may their descendants be proud of their virtues.

Among the many learned clergymen of the present day who believe that Science, and Reason, and True Religion are in perfect harmony, none stand above Henry Ward Beecher. I always embrace every opportunity to hear him preach or lecture, and always with a great deal of pleasure. He often speaks volumes in a few words. I have before me some of his printed sermons, in which, speaking of conversion, he says, "People often say they wish they were Christians," but, he says, "whenever any person really wishes to be a Christian, he is one from that moment." He says, "Many persons are Christians without knowing it, just as a new clock will not start till some one swings the pendulum, or a new watch will not tick till some one starts the movements by shaking or otherwise; yet the watch or clock may be a good one, and properly wound up. So young Christians need to be helped to tick."

While free to express his opinions, Mr. Beecher never desires to force them upon others. He does not believe in the resurrection of the natural body, but says he does not propose to speculate upon this subject, but to stand upon the ground laid down by the apostle, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." He says you might as well attempt to raise a ship from the bottom of the ocean, and leave down there all the wood and iron, as to raise a natural body without flesh and blood. We shall have spiritual bodies and not natural ones; and speaking upon this subject, a Presiding Elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church once said to me, "If I can identify my friends and they can identify me, I do not care whether my body weighs one pound or one hundred pounds." I once heard a colored minister say, in a sermon, "Many people worry about the resurrection, but it is all wrong. God will take care of that. If we go down to the grave right, we do our part and the Lord Jesus Christ will take care of the rest." The apostle says, if we "have not charity we are nothing;" and Jesus says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold." May God's blessing attend all such churches as the Congregational Church, and all such ministers as Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

AND PILATE WROTE A TITLE, AND PUT IT ON THE CROSS. AND THE WRITING WAS, —

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

THIS TITLE THEN READ MANY OF THE JEWS; FOR THE PLACE WHERE JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED WAS NIGH TO THE CITY: AND IT WAS WRITTEN IN HEBREW, AND GREEK, AND LATIN.

JOHN XIX. 19, 20.

HEBREW.

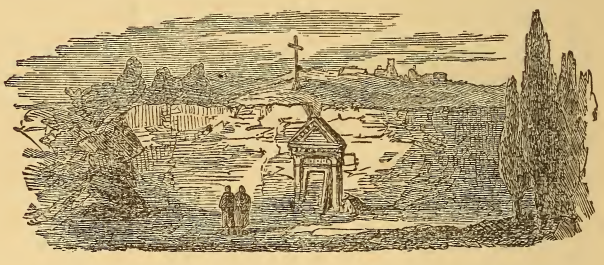
יֵשׁוּעַ הַנֹּצְרִי מֶלֶךְ הַיְּהוּדִים

GREEK.

Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

LATIN.

JESUS NAZARENUS, REX JUDÆORUM.



AND IT CAME TO PASS, AS THEY WERE MUCH PERPLEXED THEREABOUT, BEHOLD, TWO MEN STOOD BY THEM IN SHINING GARMENTS:

AND AS THEY WERE AFRAID, AND BOWED DOWN THEIR FACES TO THE EARTH, THEY SAID UNTO THEM, —

WHY SEEK YE THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD? HE IS NOT HERE, BUT IS RISEN!

LUKE XXIV. 4, 5, 6.

German.

Was ſuchet ihr den Lebendigen bei den Todten? Er iſt nicht hier, er iſt auferſtanden.

French.

POURQUOI CHERCHEZ-VOUS PARMI LES MORTS CELUI QUI EST VIVANT? IL N'EST POINT ICI; MAIS IL EST RESSUSCITÉ.

Spanish.

¿PARA QUÉ ANDAIS BUSCANDO ENTRE LOS MUERTOS AL QUE ESTÁ VIVO? NO ESTÁ AQUÍ, SINO QUE RESUCITÓ.

No. 4.

WHICH IS BEST?

LIGHT OR DARKNESS, MIND OR MATTER?

SPIRIT OR LETTER, SUBSTANCE OR SHADOW?

The Substantial, Imperishable, Spiritual Body,

Or the Material, Perishable, Natural Body?

CHOOSE YE, BUT FIRST READ AND CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION:

"Is it Rational or Scriptural to Expect a Resurrection of the Natural Body after it has Gone to Decay?"

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare [naked] grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." * * * "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." * * * "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Paul, in Fifteenth Chapter of First Corinthians.

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